Instructor: Dr. Chris Drohan (aka 'Dr. D.')</n
Instructor Contact: Please email me at drohan@okstate.edu. Be sure to include your CRN number when emailing me, or I may not respond! A full email policy can be found below. FYI, I do not take phone calls or check phone messages, so email me if you need to reach me urgently.

Introduction to the Course

Welcome to Philosophies of Life! I am looking forward to an exciting and productive semester with all of you. In this syllabus I try to give you enough information to help you succeed, so please read it thoroughly. If anything is unclear, please do not hesitate to ask me in class or during my office hours.

Course Description

This course is meant to serve as an introduction to the basic philosophers, principles, and movements in the primary branches of western philosophy: Logic, Epistemology, Metaphysics, Ethics, Aesthetics, and Politics. As we proceed together through the history of philosophy, we will also spend a considerable amount of time building our basic philosophic skills, like: defining the essence of key terms, arguing logically, substantiating arguments with convincing evidence, and avoiding logical fallacies. As philosophy is the basis of all scholastic disciplines, my hope is that you will be able to take the skills you acquire in this class and be able to use them in all of your other scholastic pursuits and career aspirations.

This course deals with several very controversial issues. Consequently it is imperative that students be respectful of each other’s beliefs and values. This does not mean that you should not challenge one another. To the contrary, philosophical discourse on any issue requires vigorous argumentation. But there is a sharp distinction between intelligent argumentation and unchecked emotional expression.

The study of philosophy can be a challenging enterprise. This semester you will be asked to think differently than you normally do. To be a philosopher means to: a) Engage in serious and rigorous self-reflection; b) Contemplate the meaning of some of our most basic concepts, things we normally take for granted; and c) Provide a logical argument justifying the beliefs one has about reality. Thinking this way is thinking philosophically. Thinking philosophically is a key aspect of intellectual maturity. Striving for intellectual maturity is, I believe, one of the central goals of a college education.

Required Texts

- The key texts for this course can all be found on our D2L/Brightspace page under ‘Content’ Θ ‘Readings’. These primary sources are the backbone of the course, and comprise most of what you will be tested on.
- Additionally, our course has a required textbook to help you to understand the primary readings:

It is available for purchase from the campus bookstore. **Be sure to purchase your copy early so that you can complete all readings on time (!).**

- **It is imperative that you keep up with all scheduled readings!** There’s a lot to read in this course, and all of it is fair-game for testing.

**Disclaimer**

All provisions in this syllabus are subject to revision by the instructor. Such revisions, if any, will be announced on D2L/Brightspace. Each student is responsible for making note of all such announcements concerning syllabus revisions and assignments.

Course material includes information which may be considered controversial and sensitive. You are still responsible for the assignments connected to the course material even if they are considered controversial. There are no “alternate” assignments. Every student has the same assignments to complete in this course. If this concerns you, you must speak with me at my office hours.

**D2L/Brightspace**

This course uses the online platform D2L/Brightspace. Important updates, announcements, and course materials will be posted to this website. You are expected to our D2L/Brightspace homepage **daily (including weekends).**

**Our Official Course Schedule**

All scheduled readings, assignments, and tests can be found on the ‘Official Course Schedule’. This Official Schedule can be downloaded from the ‘Content’ section of our D2L/Brightspace page. Occasionally, this schedule will be revised. Dr. D. will notify everyone via D2L/Brightspace if and when this happens.

**Course Requirements**

This course, as should all college courses, requires a commitment on the part of every student to be actively engaged in the class. Such engagement requires that the student come to class prepared and willing to discuss the topic and assigned readings for each class. The course requirements are oriented toward the goal of making students active participants in the course, rather than passive observers. With this goal in mind, grading will be based on the following:

- 5% - Syllabus Quiz
- 5% - Intro Discussion Post
- 30% - Online Discussions & Replies (3 X 10% each)
- 40% - Unit Tests (4 X 10% each)
- 20% - Final Exam

**Grading Scale**

Grades are based only on the quality of work. I do not make final grade decisions based on the particular needs of the student (i.e. maintaining a particular GPA). **Thus, it is your responsibility to earn the grade you want.**

In particular I look for the following in assessing students work:

1) Reasonable grasp of course material;
2) Completeness in completing the full scope of the assignment;
3) Ability to draw further conclusions;
4) Ability to offer reasoned criticism or reasoned agreement with positions presented.
Please keep in mind that it is your job to keep track of grades posted for your work. As a general rule of thumb, it’s best to check all of your class grades at the end of the week to make sure that everything looks right. If you spot an error in a posted grade, please bring it to my attention immediately via email.

The ability to effectively communicate in writing is essential to this course. This method of evaluation contributes to the critical goal of college level literacy. The ability to read and write effectively is a sine qua non of a college education. For help with this, be sure to connect with the LASSO Center to explore a number of different options for getting writing and testing help (https://lasso.okstate.edu/).

It must be understood that a grade of ‘A’ means exceptional work. Simply doing all the work does not get you an ‘A’. A grade of ‘B’ means above average work. A ‘C’ means average work. A ‘D’ means substandard work, but passing. An ‘E’ means failure to adequately achieve course objectives.

Specifically the grading scale is:

- A = 90% - 100%
- B = 80% - 89%
- C = 70% - 79%
- D = 60% - 69%
- F = 59% or lower

**Coursework**

**Syllabus Quiz (5%)**

After you’ve read and studies this syllabus, please complete the syllabus quiz on D2L/Brightspace under ‘Quizzes’. You can attempt this quiz up to 3 times until you get it perfect, so keep trying till you do!

**Introduction Discussion (5%)**

For some more easy marks, go to ‘Discussions’ and click on the ‘Introduce Yourself’ link. If you follow the guidelines and meet the word count you’ll get 5/5. Please remember to post in your first week of classes, otherwise these easy marks will be lost!

**Online Discussions (3 X 10 % = 30%)**

In these you will be asked to reflect on the module readings according to a series of philosophic questions. It’s very important that you cite the readings directly, explain them in your own words, and analyze them with your own ideas. After your initial posting, you will prompted to formally reply to and constructively critique a peer’s original posting. Additionally, perfect paragraph structure, spelling, and grammar are expected, so be sure to find a good proof-reader or to connect with the LASSO center for writing help now.

**Unit Tests and Quizzes (4 X 10% = 40%)**

After every completed module we’ll have an online test or that will evaluate your understanding of the readings and content from each module. Be sure to review all readings, online videos and lectures, and study guides in order to prepare for these.

**Final Exam (20%)**

The final exam is a cumulative evaluation of all course work. It will take place online during our scheduled exam time. In the week prior to the exam, we will review materials in class and a study guide will be provided.

**Class Attendance Online**

Class attendance is mandatory in this course! In an online class this means that you are expected to log in to D2L/Brightspace every day, including weekends. Consult the official course schedule for information regarding major assignments.
Class Attendance and Participation Policy

Class attendance is mandatory in this course! You are expected to attend class on time and prepared for class for each scheduled class session. Each student is responsible for obtaining information and assignments given during a missed class meeting prior to the next class meeting. Skipping class, or coming unprepared, will cost you marks! Don’t let this happen to you. Stay on top of the readings, come to class early, and be sure to schedule all appointments and employment outside of class hours.

Missed Assignments & Extensions

As a general rule, late assignments are not accepted in this course unless you’ve missed the class for an official reason. Here are the only acceptable reasons for late work:

- An incapacitating medical condition (a doctor’s note must be provided).
- Military leave (a signed letter from your commanding officer is required).
- Death of an immediate family member or best friend (a scanned funeral program must be provided).

As all work in this course can be done ahead of time, generally campus life events do not qualify as an official excuse for absence in an online course. Likewise with any miscellaneous emergencies that happen to pop-up in your personal life. Accordingly, submit your work early so that you can guarantee that it will be in on time!

With regards to technological issues, it is expected that you will have a reliable working computer and internet connection throughout the duration of this course. It is also expected that you will be submitting all working online well before any deadlines just in case you run into any tech issues. Thus, tech excuses are not acceptable excuses! If you run into any tech problems, be sure to contact the OSU IT Help Desk (http://help.okstate.edu/). Do not contact Dr. D. about your tech issues unless Tech Services is absolutely unable to solve your issue.

The most important consideration in this process is whether or not you provide formal documentation in a timely manner. Thus, it is essential that you notify your instructor through email the moment you know you will not be able to make class and that you send formal evidence (see the list above) to your instructor with this notice if possible.

Students are expected to arrange appointments, vacations, etc. during those times of the day and week which do not conflict with class. Such absences are not considered legitimate excuses in college.

The Code of Conduct

Our class abides by a code of conduct. If you need clarification on any of these points, please email Dr. D. ASAP.

Academic Respect and Civility Statement

Students are expected to interact with professors and peers in a respectful manner that enhances the learning environment. A student who deviates from this expectation may be required to leave our virtual classroom for a specific amount of time. In addition, the professor might consider the university disciplinary process (for Academic Affairs/Student Life) for egregious or continued disruptive behavior. In keeping with this, here are some general rules of conduct for our classroom:

* Professionalism is non-negotiable.
* Late assignments aren’t accepted without formal documentation.
* Respect your course mates.

It’s that simple!
OSU’s Academic Integrity Policy

All students assume as part of their obligation to the college the responsibility to exhibit in their academic performance the qualities of honesty and integrity. All forms of student dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action.

Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to misconduct associated with the classroom, laboratory, or clinical learning process. Some examples of academic misconduct are cheating, plagiarism, and excessive absences. For more information, refer to this guide: https://stw.sp.okstate.edu/policies/Shared%20Documents/Academic%20Integrity%20Policy.pdf

As you work on your assignments this semester, remember that cheating and plagiarism almost always get caught! Accordingly, remember to always formally reference everything (e.g. MLA format is required on written assignments in this class). Failure to do so will result in a non-negotiable grade of zero and/or a meeting with the dean and/or expulsion. For a full guide to MLA formatting, see this link: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

Student Responsibility

When you enroll in a course, you have decided to be a responsible student and to follow the syllabus as well as the class assignments. We all have choices and decisions which have to be made each day regarding our coursework, our jobs, our family, friends and other commitments. There are also many social factors which influence each day of our lives. We experience job stress, family stress, illnesses, tragedies, as well as celebrations in our lives. We are also faced with every day decisions in which we have to prioritize what to do with your time.

As your professor, I understand that many social factors influence our progress in a course as well as whether we complete assignments or not. All social factors have significance to students; thus, I will not decide if one student’s personal situation is more important than another student’s personal situation. In order to be fair to everyone, there are no late assignments in this course, and there are no exceptions to this policy. We have MANY assignments in this course so that if something happens and you miss an assignment, you can still do well in the course with the other assignments. I will also likely offer some ‘make-up’ opportunities and ‘bonus’ marks to help you make up for missed work. Outside of these, though, please do not ask me about extra-credit -- I have zero tolerance for ‘mark grubbing’.

Late Starting Students

If you enrolled late into the class, you cannot make up any assignments already missed. Deadlines are firm and there are no exceptions. If you enrolled late, work on all of your assignments from the day of enrollment. We have MANY assignments in this course that give you the opportunity to obtain points.

Course Schedule & Calendar

The schedule of all classes, readings, and set evaluations can be found on our D2L/Brightspace page under the ‘Official Course Calendar’. Please be sure to take note of all important deadlines, and to check the schedule regularly for changes.

Email Policy

Your instructors and TAs all try to respond to e-mails promptly. As an instructor, I try to respond within 24 hours during the work week. I am not available on weekends via email (i.e. 5PM Friday till 9AM Monday).

1. Send all e-mails from your official OKstate e-mail address and make sure that your full name appears at the bottom of the e-mail as it appears in student records. Instructors are not supposed to reply to unofficial email addresses.

2. Include the course name and CRN in the subject line of your e-mail, or it will likely not be answered!

3. Please address me as "Dr. D.". Remember to address all staff and faculty at OSU by their formal titles. It’s polite, and good practice for when you embark on your career later.
4. **Provide me with all of the relevant information.** Please don’t make your instructors look things up.

5. **Reply to my e-mails within 2-3 days.** It’s your responsibility to check your e-mail. Failure to read your email in a reasonable time period is not an excuse.

6. **E-mail me about things on the DO list**

**DO EMAIL INSTRUCTORS ABOUT THESE THINGS:**

1. **APPOINTMENTS.** E-mail me if you want to set up a time to chat in person on campus. I’m happy to do this!

2. **EMERGENCIES.** Let me know about medical or personal emergencies which prevent you from completing a major examination or assignment, or cause you to miss large portions of class.

3. **APPEALS.** If you want to appeal your grade, or think there’s an error in your grade, let me know. If you feel expectations on an assignment weren’t clear and you misunderstood them, **let me know within 48 hrs.**! Appeals after this time frame will likely not be entertained. Be sure to put as much relevant information in your e-mail as you can, and to logically explain where you believe I’ve made an error relative to the assignment guidelines.

4. **REMINDERS.** Sometimes I might ask you to e-mail me a reminder about something, or I might post an announcement asking for certain students to email me about something. That’s a good reason to email me.

5. **PERSONAL ISSUES.** If there is something that you’d feel uncomfortable with the class knowing, but you think I need to know about, that’s a good reason to e-mail me.

**DON’T (!) EMAIL INSTRUCTORS ABOUT THESE THINGS:**

a. **Don’t e-mail us about dropping, adding, or withdrawing from the class.** Instructors don’t generally handle these unless there’s a special situation that needs their signature. Instead, talk to your academic advisor. [https://shprs.clas.asu.edu/currentstudents/undergraduate/academic-advising](https://shprs.clas.asu.edu/currentstudents/undergraduate/academic-advising)

b. **Don’t e-mail us about missing class for non-emergency reasons.** We don’t need to know your personal reasons for missing class, whether it’s a painful break-up or a hangover. We’re not personally offended if you miss class; we understand that occasionally life situations come up. You’re responsible for what you miss.

c. **Don’t e-mail us about what you missed when you missed class.** Instead, contact one of your peers in the class to get his or her notes. If you need clarification on these notes, book an appointment with your professor or TA.

d. **Don’t e-mail us about confusion about an assignment, examination, course policy, other requirement of the course.** First, make sure that we haven’t already answered the question in the syllabus, in the guidelines, or in an announcement. If we haven’t, then email your specific question to us.

e. **Don’t e-mail us about technical issues.** We’re not technical experts! We’ll likely be of no help to you. Instead, contact OSU tech services: [http://help.okstate.edu/](http://help.okstate.edu/). You’re responsible for giving yourself time to address any technical issues before submitting an assignment, so don’t wait for the last minute. If you’ve had technical issues on your end, that’s no excuse for a late assignment.

f. **Don’t e-mail us about requesting exceptions to our late policies.** We have late policies for a reason. Follow them closely. For my class, if it’s outside of the grace period, you’ll need a serious emergency to submit something late.
g. Don’t e-mail us about questions about what your current grade is. Instead, see Brightspace/D2L for your current grade. If Brightspace/D2L hasn’t been updated yet, be patient. Send an e-mail only when the usual grading time-frame (1-2 weeks, depending on the course) has passed.

h. Don’t e-mail us about questions about what the readings are or where to find them. These are typically listed in the syllabus or on Brightspace/D2L, or sometimes given out in an announcement either in class or on Brightspace/D2L.

i. Don’t e-mail us about questions about what will be on an exam or what you are expected to bring to the exam. This information is usually provided in the course schedule, exam study guide, or as an announcement on Brightspace/D2L.

j. Don’t e-mail us about questions which you haven’t first tried to look up answers to on your own. Usually it’s there for you to find. Further, because we do a lot of other things besides teach your class, we probably don’t know the answer off the top of our heads -- to answer your question, we’d have to go through the same steps as you to find the answer.

k. Don’t e-mail us seeking long philosophic discussions. I enjoy getting e-mails from students with their ideas, and sometimes students bring up thoughts on these topics I haven’t thought of before. However, I sometimes can only engage so much over e-mail with the limited time I have. I’d rather either do it in class, or during my office hours.

l. Don’t e-mail us about questions about when grades will be available or why your grade isn’t showing up yet. Unless the normal grading period (up to two business weeks) has passed, be patient.

m. Don’t e-mail us requesting more extra-credit. As a matter of fairness, instructors don’t offer individualized extra credit opportunities. The only extra credit opportunities they’ll ever offer, if they offer any, they’ll offer to the class at large.

n. Don’t e-mail us about confusion about due dates. These are usually displayed prominently on D2L/Brightspace in our Official Course Calendar, a news announcement on D2L/Brightspace, or given in class.

I suspect you’ll find that most of your professors in college genuinely want to help you learn, however, you’ll find them extra eager if your take responsibility for yourself and your work and follow the rules above. Again, it’s all about RESPECT. Give it – get it! :-}
## WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE

(PLEASE NOTE: THIS COURSE SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE; DR. D. WILL LET YOU KNOW IF AND WHEN IT DOES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODULE#</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 14 –</td>
<td>Philosophy: &amp; The Love of Wisdom:</td>
<td>**Textbook:**Chapter 1&lt;br&gt;<strong>Online:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Syllabus&lt;br&gt;Argument Guide&lt;br&gt;Apology (Plato)&lt;br&gt;Phaedrus (Plato)&lt;br&gt;Republic (Plato)&lt;br&gt;Symposium (Plato)</td>
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<td>Feb. 10</td>
<td>- The Birth of Formal Philosophy, East &amp; West&lt;br&gt;- Philosophy in Ancient Athens&lt;br&gt;- Socrates &amp; Socratic Method&lt;br&gt;- Plato &amp; The Ring of Gyges Thought Experiment&lt;br&gt;- Plato &amp; The Charioteer Allegory&lt;br&gt;- Plato &amp; The Allegory of the Cave&lt;br&gt;<strong>Note:</strong> Your Introductory Discussion post &amp; the syllabus quiz are both due on or before Sunday, Jan. 27th. Discussion #1 is due on or before Sunday, Jan. 17th. Reply #1 is due on or before Sunday, Feb. 3rd. Test #1 is due on or before Sunday, Feb. 10th.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Feb. 11 –</td>
<td>Normative Ethics:</td>
<td>**Textbook:**Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12&lt;br&gt;<strong>Online:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Nicomachean Ethics (Aristotle)&lt;br&gt;Kant&lt;br&gt;Bentham&lt;br&gt;Mill&lt;br&gt;For more help with this module, please read the various ‘primers’ posted online, too.</td>
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<td>Mar. 10</td>
<td>- Deontological Ethics vs. Teleological Ethics&lt;br&gt;- The Ancient Greeks &amp; Virtue Ethics&lt;br&gt;- Aristotle’s <em>Nicomachean Ethics &amp; Eudaimonia</em>&lt;br&gt;- Kant &amp; Ethics: The Categorical Imperative&lt;br&gt;- Utilitarianism: Bentham&lt;br&gt;- Utilitarianism: Mill&lt;br&gt;<strong>Note:</strong> Discussion #2 is due on or before Sunday, Feb. 24th. Reply #2 is due on or before Sunday, Mar. 3rd. Test #2 is due on or before Sunday Mar. 10th.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Mar. 11 –</td>
<td>Moral Relativism:</td>
<td>**Textbook:**Chapters 2, 3, and 4&lt;br&gt;<strong>Online:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Rachels &amp; Cultural Relativism&lt;br&gt;Sartre – Freedom &amp; Responsibility&lt;br&gt;Sartre – Existential Ethics&lt;br&gt;Nietzsche: Beyond Good &amp; Evil&lt;br&gt;Nietzsche Video&lt;br&gt;For more help with this module, please read the various ‘primers’ posted online, too.</td>
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<td>Apr. 14th</td>
<td>- Rachels &amp; Cultural Relativism&lt;br&gt;- Nietzsche &amp; Ethical Skepticism&lt;br&gt;- Sartre’s Subjective Existential Ethic&lt;br&gt;<strong>Note:</strong> Discussion #3 is due on or before Sunday, Mar. 31st. Reply #3 is due on of before Sunday, Apr 7th. Test #3 is due on or before Sunday, Apr. 14th.</td>
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<td>Apr. 15 – May 3</td>
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<td><strong>Philosophic Skills:</strong></td>
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<td>- Critical Thinking &amp; Formal Argument</td>
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<td>- Evaluating Formal Arguments: Validity &amp; Soundness; Strength &amp; Cogency</td>
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<td>- Identifying Fallacies</td>
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<td>- Correlation vs. Causation</td>
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**Note:**
The Module 4 Test must be completed on or before **Friday, May 3rd.**
There is no discussion for this module, as you will need the extra time to study for your final exam.

**Online:**
- Argument Guide
- Fallacy List
- Module 4 Practice Questions

**Online Videos:**
- Introducing Critical Thinking
- Basics of Deductive Arguments
- Concept of ‘Validity’
- Concept of ‘Soundness’
- Correlation & Causation
- ‘Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc’
- ‘Straw Man’
- Appeal to Popularity/’Ad Populum’
- Begging the Question’
- Equivocation’
- Composition
- Division
- ‘*Ad Hominem*’

**FINAL EXAM:** Available Saturday, May 4th from 8am - 10pm