



## Walters State Community College Course Syllabus

### Course Information

**Course Number and Name:** PHIL 1030 Introduction to Philosophy

**Section ID:** 81318.202380

**Semester and Year:** Fall 2023

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Start Date:** August 21, 2023

**End Date:** December 08, 2023

**Course Format:** CON - Conventional Methodology

**Catalog Course Description:** A study of philosophical perspectives of human nature and the meaning of life. F, S

**General Education Course Designation:** General Education Course

**Meeting Details:** TR; 11:10AM - 12:35PM; MBSS 223

**Course Drop Deadline:** October 27, 2023

### Instructor Information

**Name:** Dr. Roger Turner

**Office Location:** CCEN 215-C

**Office Hours:** M (virtual): 4p - 9p; W: 9a - 4p; TR: 2:10p - 3:40p

**Office Phone:** 423-585-6948

**Email:** Roger.Turner@ws.edu

**Supervisor Name:** Dr. Robert Pratt

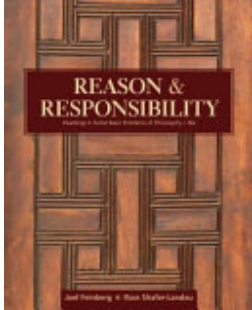
**Supervisor Phone:** 423-585-6952

### Required Textbook(s) and Materials

**Reason and Responsibility: Readings in Some Basic Problems of Philosophy**

**ISBN:** 9781305502444

**Authors:** Joel Feinberg, Russ Shafer-Landau



**Publisher:** Cengage Learning

**Publication Date:** 2016-01-01

## Supplemental or Optional Materials

Additional readings in online course packet (CP).

## Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

- 1. Articulate a basic understanding of the questions and importance of philosophy
- 2. Explain the theories of human nature of some of history's most influential philosophers
- 3. Compare and contrast different philosophical viewpoints
- 4. Recognize strong and weak arguments
- 5. Describe how philosophical thinking is relevant to everyday life
- 6. Explain Socrates' moral philosophy
- 7. Explain Plato's theory of Forms
- 8. Explain Aristotle's theory of the good life

## Instructional Approach and Methods

1. The course is lecture based.
2. Evaluation happens informally through class discussion and formally through graded assignments consisting of written papers ('reflective notes') and exams.

## Assessment, Evaluation and Testing Procedures

1. There are three exams in this course.
2. There are ten short writing assignments that are graded on a pass/fail basis.

## Grading Scale

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

## Assignments

Exams (3 @ 100 points each) = 300

Reflective Notes [RNs] (10 @ 15 points each) = 150

Total = 450 points

## Class Participation

Class attendance is mandatory, and class participation is expected.

## Course and Class Policies/Procedures

Attendance is required. You are allowed to miss four (4) class periods without penalty. After the fourth absence, I will deduct 2% from your overall grade for each absence. If you have an extended illness or some other documentable crisis that will require you to miss more than four classes, please contact me for accommodations.

- Intentional disrespect (for your classmates or for your instructor) will not be tolerated.
- No electronic devices.
- If you wish to discuss the grade you receive for *any* particular assignment you'll need to stop by during office hours. This isn't because I want to be difficult; it's because I'm much better in person,

where we can talk, than I am over email or whatever else. And please, don't come up to me before or after class to discuss a grade (unless your coming up is just a matter of setting up an appointment to meet). I likely won't remember what your grade was or why you got it on whatever assignment it is you want to discuss.

- You must be reachable via your eLearn email. I cannot stress this enough: you will be notified of any changes that occur to the course over the semester (if there are any changes, that is) via email. Moreover, if I need to contact you, personally, for any reason at all, this will be the method through which I contact you. Do not neglect to check your eLearn email often! **If a student wishes to email the instructor, s/he can expect a reply within 48 hours *except on weekends and holidays*.**

## Additional Course Requirements/Details/Information

### I. What We'll Be Doing

In this class we will focus on areas and questions in philosophy that will help us deepen our views about human nature and the meaning of life. To do this, we will focus on three main issues: knowledge (can we ever really *know* anything?), God (does God exist? Is anyone ever *intellectually* justified in believing God exists?), and free will and moral responsibility (do we ever deserve *moral* praise or criticism for our actions?). If there's time, we'll focus on the meaning of life (do our lives have a purpose? If so, what does that mean? If not, what does *that* mean?).

#### A note about doing philosophy and asking philosophical questions:

- Philosophical questions differ from other kinds of questions (e.g., scientific questions) in that they combine these three features:
- Philosophical questions concern certain abstract yet deeply interesting and important concepts: Knowledge, Intellectual Justification, God, Personhood, Causation, Action, Freedom, Moral Accountability, Justice, and so on.
- The main intellectual tool we use to explore philosophical questions is our power of *reason* or *rational insight*, a kind of "sixth sense" that's distinct from the five "empirical" senses (vision, touch, taste, smell, hearing).
- Philosophical questions resist (but do not deny that there are) final, definitive solutions: as we'll see both in assigned readings *and* in class discussion, it's often very difficult to achieve widespread agreement on the best answer to a given philosophical question.

### II. Assignments and Assessment

The grading goes as follows:

Exams (3 @ 100 points each) = 300

Reflective Notes [RN's] (10 @ 15 points each) = 150

Total = 450 points

## Exams:

There will be three exams on the material we cover in the course. The first exam will focus on the material covered in UNIT 1; the second exam will focus on the material covered in UNIT 2; the final exam will focus on the material covered in UNIT 3. The UNIT 1 exam must be taken through eLearn during our normal class meeting times on **Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>**; the UNIT 2 exam will be taken on **Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup>**; the final exam (on UNIT 3/4) will be taken during **FINALS WEEK (Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>)**.

## Reflective Notes (RNs) (10 @ 3.33% each – 33%):

Each Reflective Note (RN) you submit will earn a grade of 'Acceptable' or 'Unacceptable'. An *Acceptable* RN will be a healthy paragraph (i.e., five or more sentences) in which you raise *either* (i) a question about or (ii) an objection to something that happens in a particular assigned reading. To ensure that I understand exactly how your question or objection engages the material you're writing about, you'll need to provide some context by briefly summarizing the part of the reading your question or objection concerns. Sincere effort will usually suffice for an Acceptable RN. However, an RN that's too short or inaccurate or unclear will earn a grade of 'Unacceptable', and won't count toward this portion of the final grade. (See the end of the syllabus for two sample Acceptable RNs.)

## Here are six important rules about RNs:

- RNs must can only be submitted in the class, and prior to any discussion of the reading that the RN is about (so, once the reading has been at all discussed, students may no longer write an RN for it).
- Each RN must be about one of the starred (\*) readings in the reading schedule below (there are many more options than 10, so you'll have a lot of leeway here).
- Each of your RNs must be about a different reading assignment—no more than one RN on a given reading assignment.
- All RNs are due on or by **Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>**. No exceptions.

### III. Class Policies:

You must be reachable via your eLearn email. I cannot stress this enough: you will be notified of any changes that occur to the course over the semester (if there are any changes, that is) via email. Moreover, if I need to contact you, personally, for any reason at all, this will be the method through which I contact you. Do not neglect to check your eLearn email often! **If a student wishes to email the instructor, s/he can expect a reply within 48 hours except on weekends and holidays.**

### IV. Important Dates:

8/22 (T): First class meeting

9/19 (T): UNIT 1 Exam

10/19 (R): UNIT 2 Exam

11/30 (R): All RNs due on or before this date

12/5: UNIT 3/4 Exam

### V. Tentative Reading Schedule (CP = Course Packet; \* = RN option):

#### Preliminaries

Tues., Aug. 22 – Introduction to the course

Thurs., Aug. 24 – A little logic, and a lesson on the objectivity of truth

Tues., Aug. 29 – Michael Bratman, John Martin Fischer, and John Perry, “On the Study of Philosophy,” **(CP)**

#### UNIT 1: Are there any facts we really *know* to be true?

Thurs., Aug. 31 – Huemer, “Three Skeptical Arguments,” pp. 195 – 201 **(\*)**

Tues., Sept. 5 – Read: Pollock’s “A Brain in a Vat,” pp. 193 – 195 **(\*)**

Thurs., Sept. 7 – G.E. Moore, “Proof of an External World,” pp. 290 – 292 **(\*)**

Tues., Sept. 12 – Read: Plato’s “Knowledge and Justified True Belief,” pp. 210 – 214 (\*); Edmund Gettier’s “Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?”, pp. 215 - 216 (\*)

## UNIT 2: Is anyone ever *intellectually* justified in believing that God exists?

### 1. The Cosmological Argument

Thurs., Sept. 14 – Read: Thomas Aquinas’ “The Five Ways,” pp. 47 – 48 (\*)

Tues., Sept. 19 – EXAM on UNIT 1

### 2. The Ontological Argument

Thurs., Sept. 21 – Read: Anselm’s “The Ontological Argument,” pp. 31 – 33 (\*)

Tues., Sept. 26 – Gaunilo, “On Behalf of the Fool,” pp. 33 – 36 (\*)

Thurs., Sept. 28 – Alvin Plantinga, “A Modal Version of the Ontological Argument” (CP)(\*)

### 3. The Problem of Evil

Tues., Oct. 3 - J.L. Mackie, “Evil and Omnipotence,” pp. 118 – 126 (\*)

Thurs., Oct. 5 – Alvin Plantinga, “The Free Will Defense,” (CP) (\*)

Tues., Oct. 10 - **NO CLASS (Fall Break) :-)**

Thurs., Oct. 12 - William Rowe, “The Problem of Evil and Some Varieties of Atheism” (CP) (\*)

## UNIT 3: Do we ever deserve *moral* praise or criticism for our actions?

### 1. The Problem of Moral Responsibility

Tues., Oct. 17 – Fischer/Bratman/Perry, “Intro to Free Will/Moral Responsibility” (CP)

Thurs., Oct. 19 – EXAM on UNIT 2

Tues., Oct. 24 – Roderick Chisholm, “Human Freedom and the Self,” pp. 459 – 467 (\*)

Thurs., Oct. 26 – Robert Kane, “Free Will: Ancient Dispute, New Themes,” pp. 467 – 481 (\*)

### 2. Does Responsibility Require Freedom?

Tues., Oct. 31 – A.J. Ayer, “Freedom and Necessity”, **(CP) (\*)**

Thurs., Nov. 2 – Harry Frankfurt, “Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility,” pp. 528 – 534 **(\*)**

### 3. Do We Ever Act Freely?

Tues., Nov. 7 – Thomas Nagel, “Moral Luck,” pp. 534 – 541 **(\*)**

Thurs., Nov. 9 – Galen Strawson’s “Luck Swallows Everything,” pp. 521 – 527 **(\*)**

## UNIT 4: What is the mind? Do humans have souls?

### 1. The Mind-Body Problem

Tues., Nov. 14 – Brie Gertler’s “In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism,” pp. 359 – 372 **(\*)**

Thurs., Nov. 16 – Frank Jackson’s “The Qualia Problem,” pp. 372 – 376 **(\*)**

Tues., Nov. 21 – David Papineau’s “The Case for Materialism,” pp. 376 – 382 **(\*)**

Thurs., Nov. 23 – **NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break :-)**

Tues., Nov. 28 – William Jaworski’s “Hylomorphism: What it is, and What it isn’t,” **(CP)**

Thurs., Nov., 30 – Patrick Toner’s “Hylomorphic Animalism,” **(CP)**

### 2. Personal Identity (IF WE HAVE TIME!)

\*\*\* John Locke’s “The Prince and the Cobbler”, pp. 413 – 416 **(\*)**

\*\*\* Thomas Reid’s “Of Mr. Locke’s Account of Our Personal Identity,” pp. 416 – 419 **(\*)**

\*\*\* Derek Parfit’s “Divided Minds and the Nature of Persons,” pp. 421 – 427

\*\*\* Trenton Merricks’s “There are No Criteria of Identity Over Time,” **(CP)**

**Tues., 12/5: FINAL EXAM on UNITS 3 & 4**

## VI. Appendix: Sample ‘Acceptable’ RNs:

### 1. ‘Question’ RN:

One of Turner’s main aims in this syllabus is to give us a clear sense of the questions and issues we’ll explore in this course. Unfortunately, he sometimes slips into using unfamiliar terminology. One important place this happens is when Turner tries to describe the questions about God’s existence that we’ll be exploring. Here, he uses the expression ‘intellectually



justified': "is anyone ever *intellectually justified* in believing that God exists?" 'Intellectually justified' is not an "everyday" or "ordinary" expression: the typical person on the street probably won't know exactly what that means. Rather, this unfamiliar term seems to be one that's defined and used primarily within the field of Philosophy. So, my question: What does it mean for a belief in God to be intellectually justified?

## 2. 'Objection' RN:

According to Turner, the "main intellectual tool" we use to explore philosophical questions is what he calls the "power of *reason* or *rational insight*". Turner distinguishes what he calls 'reason' or 'rational insight' from the "five senses" (vision, touch, taste, smell, hearing). Apparently, then, Turner thinks that we can gain knowledge and/or intellectually justified beliefs using something *other than* the five senses. I don't buy this vaguely "spooky" idea. Instead, it seems to me that whatever knowledge we have comes *only* from the five senses. So, it looks like *either* Turner is wrong about the proper way to explore philosophical questions *or* Philosophy turns out to be a pretty dubious discipline. Either way, Turner seems to be wrong about Philosophy.

## Academic Honesty

Faculty expect all students to refrain from acts of academic misconduct including but not limited to:

1. Plagiarism - refers to using another person's ideas or writing without giving proper credit to the original source. Indulging in this type of conduct will subject the student to disciplinary sanctions, which may be imposed through the regular institutional procedures of Walters State Community College as outlined in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism will result in a grade of "0" for the paper/exam/presentation. Student Conduct and Disciplinary Sanctions contained in the college Catalog/Student Handbook apply (see policy 04:18:02 Disciplinary Sanctions).

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a. Using cut/paste tool from original document with no references given.
  - b. Copying another student's work and submitting it as one's own.
  - c. Forging or otherwise altering signatures.
  - d. Giving or falsifying academic documents or materials.
2. Cheating - construed as attempting to deceive or mislead which includes, but is not limited to the following:
    - a. Utilizing old tests, projects, notes or written papers.
    - b. Providing unauthorized information to a fellow student about exam content.
    - c. Receiving unauthorized aid from any source with quizzes, examinations, or other assignments.

- d. Seeking information in an unacceptable manner during/preceding an exam or other assigned work (cheat sheet, verbal exchange, looking at another person's paper or electronic device, utilizing headphones, using textbook when the test/quiz is not an open book test/quiz, using textbook test bank etc.).
  - e. Consulting with a classmate or others when taking a computerized test.
  - f. Disregarding other specific policies and procedures outlined for a particular class.
  - g. Utilizing unapproved technology/electronic equipment during testing (i.e.: mobile devices such as cell phones, smart devices, or tablets, etc.).
  - h. Using the same Internet Protocol network address (IP address) as another student for testing without approval from the course faculty.
3. The use of any generative artificial intelligence (AI) tool, such as OpenAI's ChatGPT, Google's Bard, or any other pre-trained language model (commonly referred to as "chatbot"), must be cited for any assignment where it has been used and may not be used unless specifically allowed by your instructor. Please see your instructor or the course policies within the syllabus if you have questions.

## Student Resources

### TUTORING SERVICES

Students in need of tutoring assistance are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Tutoring located as follows:

- Morristown Campus - Student Services Building Room L107 - (423) 585-6920
- Niswonger Campus - GRNV 226 - (423) 798-7982
- Sevierville Campus - MMH Room 210 - (865) 286-2787
- Claiborne Campus - Room 123A - (423) 851-4761

Specific tutoring assistance in mathematics and writing is available in-person and online as follows:

- Morristown Campus - English Learning Lab - HUM 120 - (423) 585-6970

[Walters State English Learning Lab \(opens in new window\)](https://ws.edu/academics/humanities/writing-lab)  
[ws.edu/academics/humanities/writing-lab](https://ws.edu/academics/humanities/writing-lab)

- Morristown Campus - Mathematics Lab - MBSS 222 - (423) 585-6872

[Walters State Mathematics Learning Lab \(opens in new window\)](https://ws.edu/academics/mathematics/learning-lab)  
[ws.edu/academics/mathematics/learning-lab](https://ws.edu/academics/mathematics/learning-lab)

## TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Students who need assistance with computing and technology issues should contact the IET Helpdesk by phone at Morristown: (423) 318-2742; Niswonger: (423) 798-8186; or Sevierville: (865) 286-2789 or on-line access.

[Walters State Helpdesk \(opens in new window\)](#)  
[helpdesk.ws.edu](http://helpdesk.ws.edu)

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES SUPPORT SERVICES

Students with disabilities must register with Student Support Services each semester in the Student Services Building, Room U134 (phone (423) 585-6892) if they need any special facilities, services, or consideration.

[Walters State Student Support Services \(opens in new window\)](#)  
[ws.edu/student-services/disability/](http://ws.edu/student-services/disability/)

## SUICIDE PREVENTION STATEMENT

Walters State is committed to and cares about all students. Support services are available for any person at Walters State who is experiencing feelings of being overwhelmed, hopelessness, depression, thinking about dying by suicide, or is otherwise in need of assistance. For immediate help, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by calling or texting 9-8-8 or the Trevor Lifeline at 1-866-488-7386. Veterans may also contact the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 (press 1) or Text 838255.

Walters State has a relationship in place with the following community agencies to provide services (may include crisis referral services, prevention screenings, etc.):

- Cherokee Health Systems 423-586-5032
- Frontier Health 423-467-3600

## College Policies

### STUDENTS HANDBOOK AS OFFICIAL GOVERNING DOCUMENT

This class is governed by the policies and procedures stated in the current Walters State Community College Student Handbook. All students attending Walters State Community College, regardless of the time, location, or format of the class, must abide by the rules and regulations outlined in the current Walters State Catalog/Student Handbook and the current Walters State Timetable of Classes.

[Walters State Catalog.\(opens in new window\)](#)  
[catalog.ws.edu/](http://catalog.ws.edu/)

[Walters State Timetable of Classes \(opens in new window\)](#)  
[ws.edu/admissions/registration/](http://ws.edu/admissions/registration/)

## **PURPOSE, LIMITATIONS AND MODIFICATION OF SYLLABUS**

This syllabus sets forth the expectations for the course content, work, and grading as well as expectations for student performance and conduct. The syllabus does not constitute a contract between the student and the instructor or the College. The information contained here is subject to change at any time. The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus at any time with written notification to the students. Though changes are possible, it is expected that the course will be conducted as described in this syllabus for the semester/year specified in the Course Information section of the syllabus. This syllabus is only valid for the semester/year specified and course requirements are not guaranteed for future semesters.

## **COURSE GROUND RULES**

- Students must attend the first day of on-ground class or contact the instructor prior to the first class. Failure to do this may result in being dropped from the class. Excessive absences may substantially lower the course grade.
- Regular class attendance is a student's obligation for any course regardless of format. (See the Walters State Catalog/Student Handbook). If a student misses class, it is his or her responsibility to contact the instructor regarding missed assignments and/or activities and to be prepared for the next class assignment.
- Students enrolled in web courses must follow the course attendance policy defined for online attendance during the first week of class and throughout the term. Failure to do this may result in being dropped from the class during week one OR may result in the accrual of absences which may negatively impact the student's grade in the course.
- Students who have not paid fees on time and/or are not correctly registered for this class and whose names do not appear on official class rolls generated by the Walters State student information system (MyWS) will not be allowed to remain in class or receive credit for this course.
- Electronic devices must not disrupt the instructional process or college-sponsored academic activity. Use of electronic devices is prohibited unless use of the device is relevant to the activity and use is sanctioned by the faculty member in charge. Electronic devices that are not relevant to the activity or sanctioned by the faculty member in charge should be set so that they will not produce an audible sound during classroom instruction or other college-sponsored academic activity.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

Students receiving any type of financial aid or scholarship should contact the Financial Aid Office before making any changes to their schedule. Schedule changes without prior approval may result in loss of award for the current term and future terms.

All forms of student Financial Aid may be jeopardized or lost due to the lack of Satisfactory Academic Progress in one or multiple courses. Lack of Satisfactory Academic Progress may negatively impact a student's degree/certificate completion pace and further jeopardize Financial Aid eligibility.

### **CANCELLATION OF CLASSES AND ACADEMIC CONTINUITY**

For information related to the cancellation of classes due to inclement weather or other events, please check the Senators Emergency Text system or the college's Web site at:

[Walters State Homepage \(opens in new window\)](https://www.waltersstate.edu/home/)  
[ws.edu/home/](https://www.waltersstate.edu/home/)

[Walters State Facebook page \(opens in new window\)](https://www.facebook.com/WaltersState/)  
<https://www.facebook.com/WaltersState/>

[Walters State Twitter page \(opens in new window\)](https://twitter.com/waltersstate)  
<https://twitter.com/waltersstate>

or call the college's student information line, 1-800-225-4770, option 1; the Sevier County Campus, (865) 774-5800, option 7; the Niswonger Campus (423) 798-7940, option 7; or the Claiborne County Campus, 423-636-6200, option 7. Also, please monitor local TV and radio stations for further announcements.

When an event or disaster interrupts the scheduled operations of the college and the ability to proceed with the academic course activities as planned, the college and your instructor may alter the course plan outlined in the syllabus. Should an event occur, students should refer to their course e-Learn pages and/or class materials previously delivered to receive guidance from their instructor. Students should continue to monitor the official college channels of communication listed in the above paragraph. If you would like to sign up for the Senators Emergency Text system, please go to the following Web site:

[Senator Emergency Text System \(opens in new window\)](https://www.waltersstate.edu/set/)  
[ws.edu/set/](https://www.waltersstate.edu/set/)

Dual Enrollment students attending on a high school campus should refer to the high school inclement weather cancellations.

### **LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Brightspace (commonly known as eLearn or D2L) is the college's Learning Management System (LMS).

Brightspace is committed to accessibility by "deliver[ing] a learning experience that meets the needs of all people, regardless of age or ability." [Brightspace Accessibility Standard \(opens in new window\)](#)

Brightspace is also committed to guarding student data and privacy. [Brightspace Privacy Policy \(opens in new window\)](#).