



### Attendance

Since this is a reading and writing heavy course, it is highly recommended to attend class on a regular basis. Even though notes and assignments will be posted online, classroom instruction is integral to understanding the concepts being presented. Promptness is also important—please do your utmost to not be late to class, as you may miss important information.

### Missed Assignments/Tests

If an assignment or test is missed, you MUST have a valid reason for your absence. A parent note is required in order to arrange an alternate date for submission of an assignment, or the writing of a test.

### Assignments Guidelines

In the syllabus below, you will find a day-by-day schedule for the entire school year. This is to help you with your time management and assignment preparation. Assignments/assessments are due as indicated in the syllabus. **Please abide by established deadlines:** your professors will expect you to do the same next year.

Assignments are to be completed in the following manner:

\*\*TYPED      \*\*DOUBLE SPACED      \*\*FONT SIZE: 12 PT

\*\*ACCEPTABLE FONTS: TIMES NEW ROMAN, CALIBRI, GARAMOND

\*\*NO HANDWRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED

You can either hand in your work in class, or submit to [veronica.tuzi@tcdsb.org](mailto:veronica.tuzi@tcdsb.org).

Only your essay and ISU are REQUIRED to be submitted in class, in person.

## Syllabus/Course Calendar (September-June)

**Every time an episode of *The Good Place* is viewed in class, the Episode Question Sheet is due ONE WEEK later.**

**Extra readings or assignments may be assigned, if class discussion leads to these kinds of changes.**

Regular font = Subject/Episode of that day

*Italicized items* = Readings

Underlined items = Assignment given

**Bolded items** = Due dates

September 4	Day 1: Welcome to Philosophy! <i>Various readings/handouts</i> <b><u>Please make sure you're able to login to the Google Drive for this course</u></b>
September 6	Day 2: What is Philosophy? Focus on: John Locke and <i>tabula rasa</i>
September 10	Day 3: Origins of Philosophy; Pre-Socratics; Where does Morality come from? <i>5 Different Types of Ethics</i>
September 12	Day 4: Socrates <i>An Amoral Manifesto</i>
September 14	Day 5: S1E1 of <i>The Good Place</i> ; Plato & The Allegory of the Cave <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
September 18	Day 6: Sophists and Moral Relativism <i>Making Children Moral, Making an Effort to Understand</i>
September 20	Day 7: Morality <i>Ethical Dilemmas; The Morality Machine, Where do Right &amp; Wrong come from?</i>
September 24	Day 8: Moral Judgments; David Hume & Immanuel Kant <i>Justifying our Moral Judgments, Short Introduction to Kantian Ethics, Testing Kantian Ethics, Hume on Is &amp; Ought</i>
September 26	Day 9: S1E2 of <i>The Good Place</i> ; Aristotle <u>Episode Question Sheet</u> <i>Metaphysics of Morals (excerpts)</i>
September 28	Day 10: Psychological Moral Development <i>Kohlberg's Moral Levels</i>

October 2	Day 11: S1E3 of <i>The Good Place</i> <u>Episode Question Sheet</u> <i>Nicomachean Ethics (excerpts), Virtue Ethics &amp; The New Testament</i>
October 4	Day 12: Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> <i>Moral Fictionalism</i> <i>Test Review provided</i>
October 10	Day 13: S1E4 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Self-Knowledge <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
October 12	Day 14: Theories of the Self
October 16	Day 15: <b>TEST</b>
October 18	Day 16: Theories of the Self (continued) <u>Personal Manifesto assigned</u>

October 22	Day 17: S1E5 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Utilitarianism <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
October 24	Day 18: Plato, <i>The Republic</i>
October 26	Day 19: S1E6 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Consequentialism, Contractualism <u>Episode Question Sheet</u> <i>What We Owe to Each Other</i> , <i>Thoughting: The Wicked Witch</i>
October 30	Day 20: <i>What We Owe to Each Other</i> , T.M. Scanlon <i>The Consequences of Accepting Consequentialism</i>

November 1	Day 21: S1E7 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Machiavelli, Introduction to Logic <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
November 5	Day 22: Logical Syllogisms <i>Argument Clinic</i> (Monty Python clip), <i>The Art of Logic in an Illogical World</i> (E. Cheng— <i>excerpts</i> )
November 7	Day 23: Logical Syllogisms, Logical Fallacies S1E1 of <i>The Newsroom</i> <u>Logic Exercises (Syllogisms)</u>
November 9	Day 24: Logical Fallacies <u>Logic Exercises (Fallacies)</u> <b>Personal Manifesto due TODAY</b>
November 13	Day 25: S1E8 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Buddhist philosophy <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
November 15	Day 26: International Philosophy Day! The Good Life
November 20	Day 27: John Rawls <i>Ethics in Government</i>
November 22	Day 28: S1E9 of <i>The Good Place</i> <u>Episode Question Sheet</u> <i>Test Review provided</i>
November 26	Day 29: S1E10 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Moral Absolutism & Relativism <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
November 28	Day 30: Ayn Rand & Objectivism
November 30	Day 31: <b>TEST</b>

December 4	Day 32: S1E11 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Ayn Rand & Objectivism (continued)
December 6	Day 33: George Orwell 1984, Epistemological Focus
December 11	Day 34: S1E12 of <i>The Good Place</i> , George Berkeley <u>Question Episode Sheet</u>
December 13	Day 35: S1E13 of <i>The Good Place</i> <u>Episode Question Sheet</u> <i>No Exit, Meditations of First Philosophy</i>
December 17	Day 36: <i>No Exit, Meditations of First Philosophy</i> (continued) <i>Arguments for the existence of God: revisited</i>
December 19	Day 37: George Orwell, 1984 (please read pdf copy over Christmas Break)

January 8	Day 38: George Orwell, 1984
January 10	Day 39: George Orwell, 1984
January 14	Day 40: S2E1&2 of <i>The Good Place</i> <u>Episode Question Sheet</u> <i>A Treatise on Human Nature</i>

January 16	Day 41: <i>A Treatise on Human Nature</i> (continued)
January 18	Day 42: <b>MAJOR ESSAY ASSIGNED TODAY</b>
January 24 (Student Success Day)	Day 43: <i>Predestination</i> <u>Movie Question Sheet</u> <i>All You Zombies</i>
January 28	Day 44: <i>Inception</i> <u>Movie Question Sheet</u>
January 30	Day 45: <i>Inception</i>

February 1	Day 46: S2E3 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Nietzsche and Eternal Recurrence <b><i>Predestination</i> questions due TODAY</b>
February 5	Day 47: <u>Class Debate assigned</u> <b><i>Inception</i> questions due TODAY</b>
February 7	Day 48: Class Debate preparations
February 11	Day 49: Class Debate preparations <u>Reflection on the Self assigned today</u>
February 13	Day 50: Freedom & Determinism
February 19	Day 51: <i>The Adjustment Bureau</i> <u>Movie Question Sheet</u>
February 21	Day 52: <i>The Adjustment Bureau</i>
February 25	Day 53: S2E4 of <i>The Good Place</i> <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
February 27	Day 54: Introduction to Existentialism <b>REFLECTION ON THE SELF DUE TODAY</b>

March 1	Day 55: <b>CLASS DEBATE PRESENTATIONS</b>
March 5	Day 56: Existentialism—Soren Kierkegaard <b>MAJOR ESSAY DUE TODAY</b>
March 7	Day 57: Existentialism—Jean-Paul Sartre <b><i>The Adjustment Bureau</i> questions due TODAY</b>
March 18	Day 58: Existentialism, Jean-Paul Sartre <i>Being &amp; Nothingness</i>
March 20	Day 59: Existentialism—The Meaning of Life, Albert Camus <i>Test Review provided</i>
March 22	Day 60: Existentialism—Simone du Beauvoir
March 26	Day 61: S2E5 of <i>The Good Place</i> , The Trolley Problem <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
March 28	Day 62: The Trolley Problem & The Surgeon's Dilemma

April 1	Day 63: <b>TEST</b>
April 3	Day 64: S2E6 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Personhood <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
April 5	Day 65: Personhood, Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics <i>Is a Dolphin a Person?</i>
April 9	Day 66: S2E7 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Doctrine of Double Effect, Ethics of Cloning <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
April 11	Day 67: Ethics of Abortion, Ethics of Euthanasia (Applied Ethics)
April 15	Day 68: S2E8 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Faith & Reason <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
April 17	Day 69: Soren Kierkegaard (revisited), Faith & Reason

	<i>Fear &amp; Trembling</i>
April 23	Day 70: S2E9 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Theories of the Self (revisited) <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
April 25	Day 71: S2E10 of <i>The Good Place</i> , Moral Particularism <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
April 29	Day 72: <i>Fides &amp; Ratio</i>

May 1	Day 73: <i>Fides &amp; Ratio</i>
May 3	Day 74: <b>ISU assigned today</b>
May 7	Day 75: <i>The Matrix</i> <u>Movie Question Sheet</u>
May 9	Day 76: <i>The Matrix</i> <i>Test Review provided</i>
May 13	Day 77: S2E11 of <i>The Good Place</i> <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
May 15	Day 78: <b>TEST</b>
May 17	Day 79: S2E12 of <i>The Good Place</i> , <i>The Divine Comedy</i> <u>Episode Question Sheet</u>
May 22	Day 80: <i>The Divine Comedy</i>
May 24	Day 81: <i>What We Owe to Each Other</i> , T.M. Scanlon
May 28	Day 82: Revisiting Ethical Dilemmas
May 30	Day 83: S2E13 of <i>The Good Place</i> <u>Episode Question Sheet</u> <b>ISU DUE TODAY</b> <u>Quiz: What Kind of Ethicist are You?</u>

June 3	Day 84: <b>EXAM REVIEW</b>
June 5	Day 85: <b>EXAM REVIEW</b>
June 7	Day 86: <b>EXAM REVIEW</b>

## How to Get an A in a Philosophy Class

Even if you aren't in a philosophy class, the advice I give can be relevant to attaining a greater understanding of philosophy in general. Although some philosophy professors are easy, not all are. In other words, you probably can't get an easy A in philosophy. Nonetheless, I have a great deal of advice that can help raise your grade. Here is my current advice:

### **1. Take Notes**

This should be obvious, but you should be taking notes. Some students don't think about taking notes when taking an online class, but you need notes no matter what sort of philosophy class you are taking. [Go here for more information about taking notes.](#)

### **2. Read & Re-Read**

It should be obvious to read the assigned material, but you might have to read a paragraph or essay several times.

### **3. Do Research**

You will encounter terminology and difficult reading. Look up unfamiliar terminology, and read what others have to say about the text. For example, [the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) has something to say about everything: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Plato, Aristotle, and so on.

### **4. Talk About It**

Tell others what you are learning in your class. Your conversation could help do the following:

- (a) Force you to understand the material by verbalizing it.
- (b) Make the material relevant and interesting to your life.
- (c) Relate what you learn in the class to something else.
- (d) Help you remember the material for later.

### **5. Know What Arguments Are**

A logic class can help, but you can learn quite a bit of logic on our own as well. In particular, know the following:

- (a) [formal logic](#)
- (b) [requirements of good arguments](#)
- (c) [justification](#)
- (d) [terrible ways to argue](#)

### **6. Research Essay Writing**

Try to find clear and simple philosophical writing that you can emulate and read what philosophers have to say about writing essays. For example, you might want to take a look at [Thomas Leddy's Guidelines for Writing Papers in Philosophy](#) and Jim Pryor's [Guidelines for Writing a Philosophy Paper](#).

Some quick tips:

- (a) Keep things as simple as you can. Don't be too entertaining or flowery.
- (b) Make it very clear exactly what you will write in the first paragraph.
- (c) Rewrite your essay over and over until it makes sense.

(d) Cite your sources. Have a bibliography and give page numbers, even if you aren't quoting the material. You need to give credit to other people's ideas.

### **7. Take Your Time**

Reading and writing philosophy can take a lot of time. Don't rush things. Make time for learning philosophy. You might need to set aside an entire day to write your essay. Or even the "rough draft" of your essay. I have had to do so.

### **8. Go to Office Hours**

Go to office hours to ask questions, discuss what you plan on writing for your essay, or even to present a rough draft of your essay before it's due.

### **Conclusion**

No matter what degree you want to get, what you get out of school is up to you. For most people everything learned to get a BA degree is quickly forgotten and never really put to use. Some people see the degree as little more than a "life experience." If the classes you take have anything important to teach you, then you need to put it to use and relate it to your life on your own. Remind yourself what is important and try to be excited about what you are learning. In philosophy, there are many reasons to be excited. I discussed some in my essay, "[Why Philosophy is Awesome](#)."

If philosophy seems too hard, I have two encouraging points. First, it's only too hard because it's so new and unusual to you. The more experience you get in philosophy, the easier it gets. Second, spending a day writing philosophy essays won't seem so bad after a while. You'll get used to it.

Source: <https://ethicalrealism.wordpress.com/2010/03/03/how-to-get-an-a-in-a-philosophy-class/>



## Why Philosophy is Awesome

If you are thinking about learning philosophy on your own or taking a philosophy class, it can be a good idea to think about why philosophy is so important. Philosophy is exactly what you've been waiting for.

There are at least two reasons that we should learn philosophy. One, it is enjoyable. Two, it helps us live a better life.

### **1. It is Enjoyable**

Either philosophy is enjoyable only because of how our brains work or *also* because we can realize how important philosophy is. Philosophy covers every interesting subject you can imagine: ethics, the nature of reality, free will, the meaning of life, what makes good art, and so on. The knowledge given to us by philosophy could be good for its own sake. We might not need some other reason to learn philosophy other than the goodness of learning it in and of itself.

After you learn philosophy, you will find out that many of the greatest books ever written are philosophy books and a life that hasn't read some of these books will seem to be lacking. How can we be offered such a short life in this world and not enjoy the greatest philosophical achievements?

### **2. It Helps Us Live a Better Life**

Philosophy can help us live a better life in at least two ways. One, a "good life" can be, in part, a philosophical life. Two, it can help us decide how our lives can be improved.

#### **A philosophical life might be a better life**

People used to want to seek enlightenment because enlightenment itself was one of the best things we could do. Philosophy offers the greatest kind of enlightenment that I know of. Not only could the knowledge of philosophy be good in itself, but a philosophical life (to try to live in accordance with philosophical knowledge) could also be good in itself. To become philosophical was once seen as to become a better sort of being. To become more "godly." Someone who studied philosophy might even hope to become a god. (This was even agreed upon by some Christian philosophers, such as Boethius.)

I doubt that we can become gods, but I suspect that philosophy can help us become better people. Nietzsche thought that becoming godlike was asking for too much, so he just hoped to become an overman, a better kind of person. That might be the right kind of attitude to have.

#### **A philosophical life can help us achieve our goals.**

Philosophy offers us a path to improve our critical thinking skills far beyond anything else I know of. These skills are holistic and can be applied in every domain of our life. To learn to "make sense" means we can "make sense" in our personal life and figure out what mistakes we have been making day to day. We can use philosophy to help us figure out how to improve the world, improve ourselves, and have better relationships.

Philosophy offers one of the best sorts of "self improvement" that self-help gurus tend to be too impatient to really learn about. This sort of "self-help" requires "too much thinking" and "too much work" when people want a "quick fix." The best way to improve our lives isn't to take a pill or to try to "get rich quick." It's to work on improving ourselves a little at a time. To learn about philosophy

is to learn about the world, improve our critical thinking, and to use our philosophical knowledge and skills in everyday life.

### **Conclusion**

Richard Dawkins suggested that people aren't interested enough in science because it hasn't been presented the right way. Students need to learn about science because it's "good for its own sake." He makes it sound like this means nothing more than "science is exciting" but science might be enjoyed because it is so important. Of course, science is merely one part of philosophy, and I believe philosophy is of equal importance.

People often look for meaning in all the wrong places, such as medication and the supernatural. Philosophy offers a much more satisfying sort of meaning. A meaning that must "make sense." If religion is to be meaningful, it must be supported by philosophy.

People are living their lives exhausted. They are working, shopping, and being entertained. This is not the best life for human beings. The best life for human beings requires us to use our minds and develop them beyond the capacity that other animals seem to be capable of. I believe that philosophy is one of the best ways to do so.

I couldn't imagine living a fulfilling life without philosophy. Thinking philosophically is part of being human and it's very exciting to learn about what philosophers have to say about life, morality, and the universe.

Source: <https://ethicalrealism.wordpress.com/2010/02/17/why-philosophy-is-awesome/>