

SEARCH FOR TRUTH

SPRING 2019

INSTRUCTOR

Daniel John Sportiello, Ph.D.
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OFFICE HOURS

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays,
2:00 PM–3:00 PM, and
Tuesdays and Thursdays,
11:00 AM–12:15 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the very nature of truth itself. It provides a forum in which the most pressing questions of the human mind and heart are discussed and analyzed. Students will be introduced to the great minds of history, the questions they raised, the challenges they resolved, and how their answers help us to understand the meaning and purpose of life. By joining in the search for truth, students will learn to develop well-reasoned positions on enduring philosophical questions.

COURSE OUTCOMES

This course asks you to do all of these:

- Introduce the philosophical vocabulary of the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition as inherited and advanced by Saint Thomas Aquinas.
- Describe and explain how the principles of the above tradition relate to each other and to the world.
- Compare and contrast the above tradition with other philosophical positions.

Note that, to measure your attainment of these outcomes, you must do certain assessments.

ASSESSMENTS

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on twenty-one quizzes, on four tests, and on a paper:

- Twenty-one quizzes will determine twenty-five percent of your final grade. You must submit each quiz on Canvas prior to the start of the relevant class.
- Four tests will determine fifty percent of your final grade. You must submit each test on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.
- A paper will determine twenty-five percent of your final grade. You must submit this paper on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.

Note that, if you fail to do an assessment by the time that it is due—for any reason—then you will receive a grade of zero on that assessment. Because of this, you should not wait until the last minute to do any assessment! Note also that, to do well in these assessments, you must do certain readings.

READINGS

These readings are available at the bookstore—though you are free to buy them elsewhere:

- *A Presocratics Reader: Selected Fragments and Testimonia*. Second edition. Edited by Patricia Curd. Translated by Richard D. McKirahan and Patricia Curd. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2011. ISBN: 978-1603843058.
- Plato and Aristophanes. *Four Texts on Socrates*. Revised edition. Edited and translated by Thomas G. West and Grace Starry West. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998. ISBN: 978-0801485749.
- Plato. *Republic*. Third edition. Edited and translated by Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 2016. ISBN: 978-0465094080.
- Aristotle. *Introductory Readings*. Edited and translated by Terence Irwin and Gail Fine. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996. ISBN: 978-0872203396.

Any other readings are available on Canvas.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP, BENEDICTINE VALUES, AND CORE COMPETENCIES

Servant Leadership, our Benedictine Values, and our Core Competencies are relevant to this course:

- One can be neither a servant nor a leader prior to liberating oneself from whatever stories have been imposed by others; this course is meant to provide that freedom.
- Though all six of our Benedictine Values are implicated in this course, at its heart is Hospitality—that is, a sort of vulnerability to the ideas of others.
- Three of our four Core Competencies—Communication, Critical Thinking, and Global Stewardship—are implicated in this course.

No doubt there are many ways to see how Servant Leadership, our Benedictine Values, and our Core Competencies are relevant to this course; likely several of these ways are legitimate.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Because discussion plays a crucial role in this course, it is crucial that you not only attend class but also listen attentively and contribute seriously to that discussion—not just occasionally but every time that we meet. You should, in other words, be present at and participating in every class—unless, of course, you provide an official university excuse.

Were you to miss four classes without an official university excuse, you would automatically fail the course. Worse, though, you would remain bound in darkness: the human condition would remain a mystery to you—and so you would remain a mystery to yourself.

For what it is worth, I intend this course to be one in which you are excited to attend class.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

It should go without saying that academic dishonesty of any sort is wrong. Worse than that, though, academic dishonesty reveals a serious confusion regarding the reasons that one is in a course in philosophy—or, for that matter, at a university—in the first place. Such dishonesty is occasion for as much pity as anger.

Academic dishonesty is presenting the work of another as your own. Whenever you copy the words of another, you must place those words within quotation marks and clearly cite their source. This goes not only for complete sentences but also for phrases.

As a deterrent, let me promise that I will prosecute every instance of academic dishonesty. But do not misinterpret this promise: if you feel that you do not understand something well enough to explain it in your own words—whether in this course or in any other—come to me for help. We will work together to overcome whatever difficulty stands in your way.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Though laptops, tablets, and smartphones are profoundly useful, they are also profoundly distracting. I write this as one too often bound by such distraction. Anyway, you may not use laptops, tablets, and smartphones in class unless, at your request, I have given you permission to do so.

COURSE INFORMATION

This course, PHI 108 03, meets for fifteen weeks on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 11:00 AM in TSB 107. It is worth three credits, is required for the core curriculum, and is graded according to the usual scale. (Note that there won't be any rounding.)

STATEMENT ON WORKLOAD

Since this is a three semester-credit undergraduate-level course lasting fifteen weeks, students can expect to spend a minimum of three hours a week instructional time and another six hours a week studying outside of instructional time.

STATEMENT ON EXCUSED ABSENCES

The University has a policy on excused absences related to sponsored or sanctioned activities and events. The policy is available for review online at <http://bit.ly/2thGRjo>. Students participating in such activities and events are expected to review this policy and comply with it. As long as appropriate prior notification is given according to this policy, students and faculty reach a mutual agreement concerning make-up work, and students

complete the work in question, faculty shall not penalize a student for missing a class or exam when they were granted an excused absence from the university. Any questions concerning the policy may be referred to the course instructor who may refer the question to the athletic director, the student activities director, or academic affairs for an answer.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to read the University of Mary's Academic Honor Code and Honor System and abide by all the standards of conduct and requirements contained therein. When a student is in doubt about whether or not an action might constitute an Academic Honor Code violation, he or she should request clarification from the instructor *before* the action in question is undertaken. The Academic Honor Code is available for review at <http://bit.ly/2t3ORSu>.

STATEMENT ON REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Mary, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and in the spirit of our mission, offers support for disabled students who provide the required documentation. Students with disabilities who need accommodations should apply to the Office of Student Accessibility Services. For further information, contact Dr. Lynn Dodge, coordinator of Student Accessibility Services, in the Student Success Center. You can reach her at 701-355-8264 or ljdodge@umary.edu.

COURSE COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

Dan Sportiello, Assistant Professor of Philosophy > Nathan Kilpatrick, Administrative Chair of Language, Communication, and Fine Arts > David Fleischacker, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences > Diane Fladeland, Vice President for Academic Affairs

1	Monday	January 7	No Class		
	Wednesday	January 9	Introduction		
	Friday	January 11	Introduction		
2	Monday	January 14	World	<i>Presocratics</i> , § 2	Quiz 1
	Wednesday	January 16	World	<i>Presocratics</i> , § 5	Quiz 2
	Friday	January 18	World		
3	Monday	January 21	No Class		
	Wednesday	January 23	World	<i>Presocratics</i> , § 6	Quiz 3
	Friday	January 25	World		
4	Monday	January 28	World	<i>Presocratics</i> , § 10	Quiz 4
	Wednesday	January 30	World	<i>Physics</i> , § 1	Quiz 5
	Friday	February 1	World		
5	Monday	February 4	World	<i>Physics</i> , § 2	Quiz 6
	Wednesday	February 6	World	<i>Metaphysics</i> , § 9	Quiz 7
	Friday	February 8	World		
6	Monday	February 11	World		Test 1
	Wednesday	February 13	God	<i>Euthyphro</i>	Quiz 8
	Friday	February 15	God		
7	Monday	February 18	No Class		
	Wednesday	February 20	God	<i>Presocratics</i> , § 4	Quiz 9
	Friday	February 22	God		
8	Monday	February 25	God	<i>Metaphysics</i> , § 12	Quiz 10
	Wednesday	February 27	God	<i>Apology</i>	Quiz 11
	Friday	March 1	God		

9	Monday	March 4	God		Test 2
	Wednesday	March 6	No Class		
	Friday	March 8	No Class		
10	Monday	March 11	Humanity	<i>Presocratics</i> , §§ 14.21–23	Quiz 12
	Wednesday	March 13	Humanity	<i>Republic</i> , § 2	Quiz 13
	Friday	March 15	Humanity		
11	Monday	March 18	Humanity	<i>Republic</i> , § 3	Quiz 14
	Wednesday	March 20	Humanity	<i>Republic</i> , § 4	Quiz 15
	Friday	March 22	Humanity		
12	Monday	March 25	Humanity	<i>Ethics</i> , §§ 8–9	Quiz 16
	Wednesday	March 27	Humanity		Test 3
	Friday	March 29	Humanity		
13	Monday	April 1	Wisdom	<i>Republic</i> , § 5	Quiz 17
	Wednesday	April 3	Wisdom	<i>Republic</i> , § 6	Quiz 18
	Friday	April 5	Wisdom		
14	Monday	April 8	Wisdom	<i>Republic</i> , § 7	Quiz 19
	Wednesday	April 10	Wisdom	<i>Metaphysics</i> , §§ 1.1–2	Quiz 20
	Friday	April 12	Wisdom		
15	Monday	April 15	Wisdom	<i>Metaphysics</i> , § 4	Quiz 21
	Wednesday	April 17	Wisdom		Test 4
	Friday	April 19	No Class		
16	Monday	April 22	No Class		Paper
	Wednesday	April 24	No Class		
	Friday	April 26	No Class		