



Syllabus for Intro to Philosophy (PHIL 10)

Course Information

Semester & Year: Fall 2021

Course ID & Section #: PHIL-10-E1952

Instructor's name: Tim Bos

Day/Time of required meetings: MW 10:05 – 11:30

Location: Humanities 213

Course units: 3

Instructor Contact Information

Office location: Creative Arts 106

Office hours: 12:00 – 1:00

Phone number: 510-325-0446

Email address: tim-bos@redwoods.edu

Catalog Description

An introduction to the central and enduring philosophical problems and the arguments historical and contemporary philosophers have made about them. Topics to be addressed include epistemology; metaphysics; the relation between the mind and the body; the nature of free will; the existence of God; the foundations of morality; aesthetics; and justice. Emphasis is on using methods of philosophic inquiry to develop and defend individual responses to perennial questions.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

1. Apply the methods of philosophical inquiry to philosophical questions.
2. Evaluate the theories and arguments of major philosophers in response to central and enduring philosophical questions.

Accessibility

College of the Redwoods is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability-related services and accommodations, please contact your instructor or [Disability Services and Programs for Students](#) (DSPS). Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPS based on their campus location:

- Eureka: 707-476-4280, student services building, 1st floor
- Del Norte: 707-465-2324, main building near library
- Klamath-Trinity: 530-625-4821 Ext 103

If you are taking online classes DSPS will email approved accommodations for distance education classes to your instructor. In the case of face-to-face instruction, please present your written accommodation request to your instructor at least one week before the needed accommodation so that necessary arrangements can be made. Last minute arrangements or post-test adjustments usually cannot be accommodated.

Student Support

Good information and clear communication about your needs will help you be successful. Please let your instructor know about any specific challenges or technology limitations that might affect your participation in class. College of the Redwoods wants every student to be successful.

Evaluation & Grading Policy

Online Quizzes: 25%*

Online Discussion Participation: 25%**

Midterm: 25%

Final: 25%

*The quizzes will be open-book and taken online at your own leisure. Each quiz will be up for a week. You can take a quiz a second time if desired, and the highest grade will automatically be recorded.

**Discussion participation will also get you a guaranteed 100%, provided you do the following each week:

- (1) Post a substantive answer to the discussion prompt (it has to be obvious that you read the assigned reading and that you really thought about the topic).
- (2) Post at least one thoughtful reply to a peer's post. You should always stick to the issue and the arguments, and never stoop to personal attacks.
- (3) Reply to me if I respond to your post.
- (4) Complete (1) and (2) within a week of the Discussion prompt appearing on Canvas.

Please note: Late work will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Introduction to the Course

Required Text: *Philosophy: Asking Questions, Seeking Answers* (Stephen Stich & Tom Donaldson)

So what is philosophy? Ironically, that is itself a philosophical question, and different answers have been proposed by philosophers throughout the centuries. A traditional answer is that philosophy is the search for ultimate knowledge about the world and our place in it. That answer does make some sense, if you look at the questions that philosophers have asked. Here is a short, arbitrary list of just some of the questions that philosophers have grappled with:

- (1) What is reality like?
- (2) What is the nature of time?
- (3) Does God exist?
- (4) Are numbers objectively real?
- (5) How should I live my life?
- (6) What is the relationship between the mind and the body/brain?
- (7) If everything has a cause, do we have free will?
- (8) What is truth?
- (9) Do colors exist in reality, or just in a person's perception?
- (10) Why is there something rather than nothing?

Based on just this list, you could see why the philosopher Wilfrid Sellars (1912–89) defined philosophy like this:

“The aim of philosophy, abstractly formulated, is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term.”

You can see that these are deep (and sometimes weird) questions, and it's not clear that any of the “hard” sciences (physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, etc.) are completely equipped to deal with them. Typically, philosophers try to answer these questions by thinking very hard about them, and hopefully checking to make sure that no logical mistakes are being made when coming up with potential answers. The philosopher Socrates said that philosophers should “follow the good arguments wherever they lead.” And, yes, sometimes good arguments can lead to conclusions that you might not like. We will talk in class about what we mean by a “good argument.” But the important thing to know right off the bat, is that philosophers value things like intellectual honesty, clear thinking, evidence-based reasoning, and a fearless commitment to finding out the truth about the world and our place in it, no matter how unsettling the answers might be. If you are going to stay enrolled in the class, you will have to adopt these values as well, at least in the context of this class. We will go into great depth discussing difficult topics such as God, death, morality, and free will.

On a side note: I should mention that, while I am happy to talk about my own views about all these questions, you will never be asked to agree with my ideas. I will not try to convert you to my point of view on any of the issues we will be discussing. We will be studying different possible answers to these philosophical questions, and the various arguments for those positions. If you come to any conclusions about any of the issues under discussion, then you should do that because you were convinced by good arguments, not “because I said so.”

Here's what you should be able to demonstrate by the end of the course:

- (1) The ability to discuss some of the major topics that have been addressed by philosophers (from epistemology to metaphysics to ethics).
- (2) The ability to analyze and evaluate philosophical arguments.
- (3) The ability to put into practice the intellectual values found in the philosophical tradition.
- (4) The ability (and hopefully desire) to begin your own journey of philosophical discovery.

Admissions deadlines & enrollment policies

Fall 2021 Dates

- *Classes begin: 8/21/21*

- *Last day to add a class: 8/27/21*
- *Last day to drop without a W and receive a refund: 9/03/21*
- *Labor Day Holiday (all campuses closed): 09/06/21*
- *Census date: 9/07/21 or 20% into class duration*
- *Last day to petition to graduate or apply for certificate: 10/28/21*
- *Last day for student-initiated W (no refund): 10/29/21*
- *Last day for faculty-initiated W (no refund): 10/29/21*
- *Veteran's Day (all campuses closed): 11/11/21*
- *Fall Break (no classes): 11/22/21 – 11/26/21*
- *Thanksgiving Holiday (all campuses closed): 11/24/21 – 11/26/21*
- *Final examinations: 12/11/21 – 12/17/21*
- *Last day to petition to file P/NP option: 12/17/21*
- *Semester ends: 12/17/21*
- *Grades available for transcript release: approximately 01/07/22*

Academic dishonesty

In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

Disruptive behavior

Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include, but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

Inclusive Language in the Classroom

College of the Redwoods aspires to create a learning environment in which all people feel comfortable in contributing their perspectives to classroom discussions. It therefore encourages instructors and students to use language that is inclusive and respectful.

Setting Your Preferred Name in Canvas

Students have the ability to have an alternate first name and pronouns to appear in Canvas. Contact [Admissions & Records](#) to request a change to your preferred first name and pronoun. Your Preferred Name will only be listed in Canvas. This does not change your legal name in our records. See the [Student Information Update form](#).

Canvas Information

If using Canvas, include navigation instructions, tech support information, what Canvas is used for, and your expectation for how regularly students should check Canvas for your class.

Log into Canvas at <https://redwoods.instructure.com>

Password is your 8 digit birth date

For tech help, email its@redwoods.edu or call 707-476-4160

Canvas Help for students: <https://www.redwoods.edu/online/Help-Student>

Canvas online orientation workshop: <https://www.redwoods.edu/online/Home/Student-Resources/Canvas-Resources>

Community College Student Health and Wellness

Resources, tools, and trainings regarding health, mental health, wellness, basic needs and more designed for California community college students, faculty and staff are available on the California Community Colleges [Health & Wellness website](#).

[Wellness Central](#) is a free online health and wellness resource that is available 24/7 in your space at your pace.

Students seeking to request a counseling appointment for academic advising or general counseling can email counseling@redwoods.edu.

Emergency procedures / Everbridge

College of the Redwoods has implemented an emergency alert system called Everbridge. In the event of an emergency on campus you will receive an alert through your personal email and/or phones.

Registration is not necessary in order to receive emergency alerts. Check to make sure your contact information is up-to-date by logging into WebAdvisor <https://webadvisor.redwoods.edu> and selecting 'Students' then 'Academic Profile' then 'Current Information Update.'

Please contact Public Safety at 707-476-4112 or security@redwoods.edu if you have any questions. For more information see the [Redwoods Public Safety Page](#).

In an emergency that requires an evacuation of the building anywhere in the District:

- Be aware of all marked exits from your area and building
- Once outside, move to the nearest evacuation point outside your building
- Keep streets and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel

Do not leave campus, unless it has been deemed safe by the campus authorities.

Del Norte Campus Emergency Procedures

Please review the [Crescent City campus emergency map](#) for campus evacuation sites, including the closest site to this classroom (posted by the exit of each room). For more information, see the [Redwoods Public Safety Page](#).

Eureka Campus Emergency Procedures

Please review the [campus emergency map](#) for evacuation sites, including the closest site to this classroom (posted by the exit of each room). For more information on Public Safety go to the [Redwoods Public Safety Page](#). It is the responsibility of College of the Redwoods to protect life and property from the effects of emergencies within its own jurisdiction.

In the event of an emergency:

1. Evaluate the impact the emergency has on your activity/operation and take appropriate action.
2. Dial 911, to notify local agency support such as law enforcement or fire services.
3. Notify Public Safety 707-476-4111 and inform them of the situation, with as much relevant information as possible.
4. Public Safety shall relay threat information, warnings, and alerts through the Everbridge emergency alert system, Public address system, and when possible, updates on the college website, to ensure the school community is notified.
5. Follow established procedures for the specific emergency as outlined in the College of the Redwoods Emergency Procedure Booklet, (evacuation to a safe zone, shelter in place, lockdown, assist others if possible, cooperate with First Responders, etc.).
6. If safe to do so, notify key administrators, departments, and personnel.
7. Do not leave campus, unless it is necessary to preserve life and/or has been deemed safe by the person in command.

Klamath Trinity Campus Emergency Procedures

Please review the responsibilities of, and procedures used by, the College of the Redwoods, Klamath-Trinity Instructional Site (KTIS) to communicate to faculty, staff, students and the general public during an emergency. It is the responsibility of College of the Redwoods, Klamath-Trinity Instructional Site (KTIS) to protect life and property from the effects of emergency situations within its own jurisdiction.

1. In the event of an emergency, communication shall be the responsibility of the district employees on scene.
 - a. Dial 911, to notify local agency support such as law enforcement or fire services.
 - b. If safe to do so, notify key administrators, departments, and personnel.
 - c. If safe to do so, personnel shall relay threat information, warnings, to ensure the school community is notified.
 - d. Contact Jolene Gates 530-625-4821 to notify of situation.
 - e. Contact Hoopa Tribal Education Administration office 530-625-4413
 - f. Notify Public Safety 707-476-4111.
2. In the event of an emergency, the responsible district employee on scene will:
 - a. Follow established procedures for the specific emergency as outlined in the College of the Redwoods Emergency Procedure Booklet.
 - b. Lock all doors and turn off lights if in lockdown due to an active shooter or similar emergency.

- c. Close all window curtains.
- d. Get all inside to safe location Kitchen area is best internal location.
- e. If a police officer or higher official arrives, they will assume command.
- f. Wait until notice of all is clear before unlocking doors.
- g. If safe to do so, move to the nearest evacuation point outside building (Pooky's Park), directly behind the Hoopa Tribal Education Building.
- h. Do not leave site, unless it has been deemed safe by the person in command. Student Support Services (required for online classes)

Student Support Services

The following online resources are available to support your success as a student:

- [CR-Online](#) (Comprehensive information for online students)
- [Library Articles & Databases](#)
- [Canvas help and tutorials](#)
- [Online Student Handbook](#)

[Counseling](#) offers assistance to students in need of professional counseling services such as crisis counseling.

Learning Resource Center includes the following resources for students

- [Academic Support Center](#) for instructional support, tutoring, learning resources, and proctored exams. Includes the Math Lab & Drop-in Writing Center
- [Library Services](#) to promote information literacy and provide organized information resources.
- [Multicultural & Diversity Center](#)

Special programs are also available for eligible students include

- [Extended Opportunity Programs & Services \(EOPS\)](#) provides services to eligible income disadvantaged students including: textbook award, career academic and personal counseling, school supplies, transportation assistance, tutoring, laptop, calculator and textbook loans, priority registration, graduation cap and gown, workshops, and more!
- The TRiO Student Success Program provides eligible students with a variety of services including trips to 4-year universities, career assessments, and peer mentoring. Students can apply for the program in [Eureka](#) or in [Del Norte](#)
- The [Veteran's Resource Center](#) supports and facilitates academic success for Active Duty Military, Veterans and Dependents attending CR through relational advising, mentorship, transitional assistance, and coordination of military and Veteran-specific resources.
- Klamath-Trinity students can contact the CR KT Office for specific information about student support services at 530-625-4821