

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
Department of World Languages and Philosophy
Rockville Campus

PHIL 101, Introduction to Philosophy Spring 2019

CRN 31824, TR 9:30–10:45 am, HU 222
Geoffrey Batchelder, Ph.D., Instructor

Email is the best way to contact me outside class. Please use my official MC address, geoffrey.batchelder@montgomerycollege.edu. Questions, comments, and requests are welcome and will normally be answered within 48 hours; however, please *do not* try to submit assignments or other class materials by e-mail.

Office hours are TR, 11–12, but please stop me at the end of class or send an e-mail first rather than dropping by unexpectedly, as many issues can be resolved without a special trip. *Do not* put assignments or other course materials on or under my door or in my mailbox. All work for this course *must* be submitted in class.

Blackboard: Our course has a Blackboard shell where grades and course materials will be posted. This is *not* an online class however, so our use of Blackboard will be limited. *Do not* try to send messages to the instructor using the Blackboard messaging feature, as it is not monitored. Use regular e-mail instead for a prompt response.

Description: Introduction to philosophical analysis of the problems of knowledge, reality, and the good, and to major philosophical attitudes of Western civilization, with attention to some philosophical implications of contemporary natural and social science. Basic course themes are that major philosophical questions arise in all people's lives, that we must clarify them, if possible, before trying to answer them; and that such questions are always concerned with the nature and meaning of human existence. (HUMD) PREREQUISITE: Second-year standing or consent of the department. Assessment levels: ENGL 101/101A, MATH 093/096, READ 120. Three hours each week. Formerly PL 201.

Readings and Supplies: This class uses free online resources instead of a printed textbook, so regular and dependable access to a computer or similar device is required. Most assigned reading and viewing materials will be linked or posted to our online Blackboard shell, but others may occasionally be circulated as paper handouts or placed on reserve in the library. Optional related books, films, or other media may be recommended from time to time or offered for extra credit. You will need a pen and notebook for taking class notes and a separate folder and supply of college-ruled loose-leaf paper for keeping a journal.

Requirements and Grades

Assignments and due dates: This class has three exams and a journal. Attendance and participation will be graded, and there may be several quizzes or in-class writing exercises. Grading weights and due dates for some of these may be found below; more specific details about format, subject, and the like will be distributed in class as the tasks are assigned. You *must* keep copies of all assignments submitted in this course. In the rare event your report, journal, or other assignment should be lost, you will need to supply a replacement copy.

Grades: The final grade in this course will be an average of the grades received on the various assignments and other components of the course, weighted according to the following schedule. Also included here is a guide to grade interpretation.

<i>Relative Weight</i>		<i>Scale Interpretation</i>			
		<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>QP</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Attendance	15%	A	90-100	4	Super
Participation	15%	B	80-89	3	Great
Exam 1	15%	C	70-79	2	Good
Exam 2	15%	D	60-69	1	Fair
Exam 3	20%	F	0-59	0	Poor
<u>Journal</u>	<u>20%</u>				
Total	100%				

Academic dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, facilitation, and fabrication, is strictly forbidden under section 8 of the MC Student Code of Conduct. For any form of academic dishonesty, the penalty for first offenses will be a failing grade on the tainted assignment, and for second offenses, an “F” for the whole course.

Recycling or resubmitting work from other classes past or present is strictly prohibited. Students who resubmit work created for other courses will incur the same penalties that apply in cases of outright plagiarism. All work submitted for credit in this course must be written from scratch during the current term, solely and specifically for this course. Work from other courses or from other academic or non-academic settings is not acceptable.

Attendance is required and worth 15% of the final course grade. Roll will be called at every class meeting, and each full and timely presence will earn 3½ points toward the final attendance grade. No penalties will be imposed for absence per se, but the *only* way to earn attendance points, without exception, is by being present. No distinction is recognized between excused and unexcused absences, so *no excuse notes* will be required or accepted. Late arrival or early departure, unless pre-authorized, will reduce earned attendance points in proportion to the amount of class time missed. Those missing roll-call should check in with the instructor at the end of class to be marked late instead of absent; no retroactive changes will be made to the attendance record. Excessive or recurrent lateness will not be tolerated.

This no-fault policy is designed to be fair and easy to understand, and it's more lenient than the general collegewide policy, but it shouldn't be interpreted as condoning absenteeism. Absences should be avoided because they incur negative consequences like lower exam scores due to reduced exposure to course topics and discussions, lower participation averages due to missed assessments, or time lost searching for handouts or notes.

Exams are serious academic obligations, and every effort should be made to take them during the officially scheduled class periods; absences on these days are strongly discouraged. Please plan your schedule carefully in advance to avoid conflicts. In the event of unavoidable absence, you should contact the instructor immediately to request a makeup. Exams are time-sensitive, and points will be lost for each day that passes; no makeup will be given more than a week after the originally scheduled exam date.

Assignments like presentations or journals should be turned in on the scheduled due date. Late submissions will incur a grade penalty and may not be accepted in all cases. If absence is unavoidable when an assignment is due, contact the instructor *before* the class in question to receive the best terms. Failure to make contact will be interpreted as a lack of concern and will increase the likelihood or severity of grade penalties.

Short assessments such as quizzes or freewrites may be given from time to time, normally in weeks when there is no exam or other major class event scheduled. Such exercises may be either announced or unannounced and will be available *only* during the class when they are first given, that is, they cannot be made up later. Please arrive on time, as these will normally be given at the beginning of class. If you miss one due to tardiness or absence, you will receive a zero for it. A limited number of low or missed short assessment grades may be replaced through extra credit assignments, but this may not always be an option. The best way to do well is to come to class on-time and well-prepared.

Participation is required and will be factored into the final grade along with short assessments and decorum. Students are expected to make active and appropriate contributions during class. This means arriving prepared, paying attention when others are speaking, and commenting, reading, or asking questions when called on or at other appropriate times. It is understood that some are naturally more outgoing than others, but a reasonable effort is expected of all. Meanwhile, don't overdo it: repeated attempts to monopolize class discussion after a warning has been given will incur a grade penalty.

Etiquette and decorum: Please do not eat or bring food to class; drinks are okay unless they spill or become a distraction. No smoking or alcohol. During regular class meetings, the use of cell phones, tablets, or laptops for taking notes or accessing course materials is okay, but please don't talk on the phone or listen to music. Please take written notes whenever possible and share them with classmates who may ask. Ask permission before making audio or video recordings. During exams and other assessments, phones and other devices need to be turned off and put away, and hoods, earbuds, and sunglasses must be removed; books, notes, backpacks, purses, jackets, and similar items should be put under the desk, on the floor, or otherwise out of the way. In general, it is up to the instructor to decide whether specific practices or situations disrupt the learning environment or are otherwise

inappropriate. If you are polite and considerate, exercise common sense, and ask when in doubt, problems are unlikely.

Student Information Link: The MC website explains key policies and procedures:

<http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/mcsyllabus/>

This link leads to information on the Academic Calendar, ADA Information and Compliance, the Alert Montgomery System, the Code of Student Conduct, Counseling & Advising, Disability Support Services, Learning Centers and Academic Support Centers, Safety, Security, & the Emergency Operations Plan, and Sexual Harassment or Discrimination. Students enrolled in this course must accept and follow these policies. Contact the instructor with any questions.

Important Dates: The following list gives key items from the Registrar's collegewide schedule and adds dates for exams and other events specific to this course. This list is offered as a convenience; some dates may be subject to change. A detailed schedule of lessons and assignments will be provided separately.

Tue., Jan. 22	First day of class
Mon., Feb. 11	Last day to change audit/credit
Thu., Feb. 21	First exam
Thu., Mar. 7	Journals due for review
Mar. 11-17	Spring break
Thu., Apr. 4	Second exam
Mon., Apr. 15	Last day to withdraw
Thu., May 2	Last regular class meeting – Journals due
Thu., May 9	Final exam, 8:00-10:00 am
Wed., May 16	Grades due, 11:59 pm