



**SUFFOLK**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
MADRID CAMPUS

**PHIL 115 M1 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**

**Instructor Information:**

**Instructor:** Robert Greenan

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**Course Information:**

**Catalog Description:** A general introduction to the nature of philosophical analysis. Lectures, readings, and discussions will focus on representative issues and thinkers from the main areas of philosophy (such the nature of truth, reality, morality, politics, and religion).

**Instructor's Additional Course Description:** The intellectual infrastructure of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is being undermined by two phenomena: ignorance of the origins of our methods of thinking (and of there being methods of thinking in the first instance) and the emergence of superstition and propositions which are not founded in reason as assertive, militant and hugely influential substitutes for knowledge.

**The purpose of this course is therefore to seek to reconnect with the body of knowledge and ideas which because of their very effectiveness have come to be taken for granted, and to make students aware of the very concrete and vital differences which exist between science and philosophy on the one hand and superstition and popular lore on the other.**

**Prerequisites:** None

**Credit Hours:** 4

This course follows the US Federal Government's Credit Hour definition: "An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutional established equivalence that reasonably approximates no less than:

- (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."

For full up-to-date statement:

[https://cihe.neasc.org/sites/cihe.neasc.org/files/downloads/POLICIES/Pp111\\_Policy\\_On\\_Credits-And-Degrees.pdf](https://cihe.neasc.org/sites/cihe.neasc.org/files/downloads/POLICIES/Pp111_Policy_On_Credits-And-Degrees.pdf)

To complete this course, students will need to dedicate, at a minimum, the following amount of time to the listed activities:

<b>Assignment/Activity</b>	<b>Engagement Estimate</b>	<b>Engagement Hours</b>
Course Readings	400 pages x 8 minutes per page	53
Review Lecture Notes	8 pages/lecture x 20 lectures x 5 min per page	13
Homework	Weekly reading reports x 15 (3 hours each)	45
Mid-Term Review Preparation		5
Mid- Term Exam Preparation		10
Final Exam Review Preparation		5
Final Exam Preparation		10
Class Attendance	3 hours x 15 weeks	45
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>186 HOURS</b>

**Textbook/Course Materials:**

- History of Western Philosophy. Bertrand Russell.
- Extra reading to be found in: Philosophy, Basic Readings. Nigel Warburton (Ed).
- Mastering Philosophy. Anthony Harrison-Barbet.

**Important Note on Workload**

This is a 4-credit university course. Students must keep in mind that they will be expected to spend at least the above mentioned timeframe working outside of the classroom per week. This work will consist of:

- A. Writing up a coherent set of notes for every class.
- B. Reading the text to be addressed in the next class. Students should remember that reading philosophy is not like reading a novel. A text will only give up its meaning to those who read and re-read many times. Don't be crest-fallen, put in the time!
- C. Students must make notes on what they've read, criticise the text and write down questions they have for the next class.
- D. Students must go to the library and find sources of knowledge on a given topic other than those contained in the textbook. Notes must be taken, criticism made and also a statement as to why this source was chosen over its competitors. Evidence of having done this, be it in written form or verbally, will be taken into account in the participation section of the grade.

**Social and Intellectual History Goals and Learning Objectives:**

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Assessments</b>
1. Students will explain the origins and significance of cultural and historical phenomena.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to explain the causes and effects of at least one phenomenon.</li> <li>2. Students will be able to analyze the phenomenon in its cultural and historical contexts.</li> <li>3. Students will be able to evaluate the significance of the phenomenon from multiple perspectives.</li> <li>4. Students will be able to understand that historical developments result from the confluence of changing cultural and historical factors.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The entire perspective of this course is to view different schools of philosophical thought from the point of view of the historical circumstances giving rise to these schools.</li> <li>• Specific exam questions will target the students' knowledge of historical contexts.</li> <li>• Specific exam questions will target students' knowledge of the differing perspectives and paradigms through which each idea can be viewed.</li> <li>• Students will be tested on their knowledge of this aspect of the course through written exam questions and verbal questions in the classroom.</li> </ul>

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Assessments</b>
2. Students will develop the ability to read primary and secondary sources critically.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to define and distinguish among primary and secondary sources.</li> <li>2. Students will be able to comprehend and summarize the author's central ideas and themes.</li> <li>3. Students will be able to identify the author's purposes and audience.</li> <li>4. Students will be able to situate texts in their historical and cultural contexts.</li> <li>5. Students will be able to detect and discuss the values, assumptions, and biases that inform a text.</li> <li>6. Students will be able to assess the similarities and dissimilarities among related sources.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objectives, 1-6 in this section (2) will be assessed using both exam questions and class questions and discussions.</li> <li>• Preparing for each section will involve the reading of original texts (in translation). The student will be expected to defend in class, their knowledge of context, purpose, bias and values of each source.</li> <li>• This will be assessed in class, by verbal questioning and discussion.</li> <li>• This will be assessed in class, by verbal questioning and discussion.</li> <li>• This will be assessed in class, by verbal questioning and discussion.</li> <li>• This will be assessed in class, by verbal questioning and discussion.</li> </ul>
3. Students will understand how ideas evolve and how they reflect and are produced by human meaning-making (including their own thoughts and actions).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will be able to identify and describe the distinguishing features of one or more schools of thought.</li> <li>2. Students will be able to explain relationships among ideas, conditions, and events.</li> <li>3. Students will be able to analyze how ideas illuminate or argue for the purpose or significance of human experience.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The course is taught chronologically and students will be expected to prove their appreciation of the evolution of the ideas under discussion.</li> <li>• Class questions and discussion will be tailored to this purpose.</li> <li>• Exam questions will be set with the express purpose of testing students' appreciation of the purpose and significance of human experience.</li> </ul>
4. Students will understand how learning and experiences inside and outside the classroom are connected and interdependent.		Each subject studied will be illustrated using real-life examples and scenarios. To achieve this end reference will be made to contemporary issues from the media and popular culture. Students will have to demonstrate in class that they have considered these issues.

**PHIL 115 Course Goals & Learning Objectives:**

<b>Upon successful completion of this course, students will know/understand:</b>	<b>Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:</b>	<b>How the student will be assessed on these learning outcomes</b>
The body of knowledge underpinning our western intellectual heritage.	Critically think.	Written exams.
The nature of the contribution of the Greeks to above.	Reason clearly.	Research papers.
The relation between Rome and the emergence of the mediaeval period.	Distinguish between science and superstition.	Evidence of solitary reading and original thought.
The nature of Renaissance thought and it's leading to the Enlightenment.	Express ideas in an unmuddled fashion.	

### **Course Policies:**

In the event that a class meeting is unexpectedly cancelled, students will be expected to continue with readings or other assignments as originally scheduled. Any assignments due or class activities (e.g., a quiz, exam or presentation) planned for such a cancelled class are due at the next class meeting unless other instructions are communicated.

Students are expected to be self-conscious in their pursuit of sources of information and knowledge for this course. It will be considered self-evident in this course that at a third level learning institution students need not be told to visit the library and seek out for themselves books and articles relating to subjects covered in class.

### **Classroom Policies:**

- Students may not eat in class.
- Students may not chat to each other during class and will be asked to leave for doing so.
- Course work is not accepted late, or by e-mail unless this is expressly agreed upon with the instructor.
- Computers may be used only if specific permission is received.
- Students arriving more than five minutes late for class may be marked absent. Those arriving more than 15 minutes late may be refused entry. Late arrivers must make sure they are marked as present as this cannot be done afterwards.
- Students may not record the class in any form.
- Students may not use mobile 'phones during class or be able to see their mobile 'phones during class.
- Students who use their 'phone to monitor the time ought to buy a watch for this purpose which can be worn on the wrist or placed on the desk.

### **Grading/Evaluation:**

First Mid-Term Exam:	25%
Final Exam:	25%
Research Project(s):	25%
Informed Participation:	25% (Including reading reports).

### **Participation/Attendance Policy:**

The SUMC Student Handbook states the following:

*Once a student is registered for a course, attendance at every meeting of every class is expected, including those held in the first week of the semester. A maximum of two unjustified absences is permitted. Each additional absence will cause the final course grade to be lowered by one-third of a letter grade, i.e., from A to A-; A- to B+; B+ to B, etc.*

*Excessive absences in a course will have a negative effect on the final grade. When a student is absent, the quality of his or her work in a course will deteriorate since material missed in class sessions can rarely be made up satisfactorily, even though the student remains responsible for that work.*

*Please note that even when a student has a justified reason for missing class, such as illness, the negative academic impact on learning will be the same as if the absence were for spurious reasons.*

In this course, any absence due to illness should be justified by a note from the student's physician or other health professional confirming the day(s) on which the student was unable to attend class. A written excuse from a student's host parent or residence supervisor is also acceptable.

In the case of a student not turning up for an exam without giving notice, the student must provide documentary proof not only that they visited the doctor, and were incapable of sitting the exam, but also that they were physically incapable of contacting the university to advise of the issue.

In the event that a class meeting is unexpectedly cancelled, students will be expected to continue with readings or other assignments as originally scheduled. Any assignments due or class activities (e.g., a quiz, exam or presentation) planned for such a cancelled class are due at the next class meeting unless other instructions are communicated.

Students arriving more than 15 minutes late will not be admitted to class.

**Disability Statement:**

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in my classroom.

If formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at the main Campus in Boston so that I am notified of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations. Check the ODS web site at [www.suffolk.edu/disability](http://www.suffolk.edu/disability) for information on accommodations.

**Student Resources:**

SUMC provides a range of student services, both academic and personal. To learn more about course-related tutorials and academic workshops, refer to the SUMC Student Handbook, Section 2 “Academic Policies and Services”. Section 5, “Living in Madrid”, contains information on the medical and mental health resources, including an English-speaking therapist, available to you.

**Midterm Review:**

At midterm, around week 6, you will be given a midterm grade based on your progress to date and performance on presentations, quizzes and the midterm exam. Midterm grades of C- or below will be reported to the Madrid Campus Academic Standing Committee, with an explanation of what I believe has contributed to that grade: excessive absences, poor time management or study skills, lack of effort, difficulty with the course material or with writing or language skills, etc. The Academic Standing Committee or I may contact you to suggest strategies for addressing these difficulties. I strongly encourage you to visit me during my office hours so we may discuss how you can be successful in this class.

**Academic Misconduct:**

[www.suffolk.edu/about/mission-history/policies-procedures/academic-misconduct-policy](http://www.suffolk.edu/about/mission-history/policies-procedures/academic-misconduct-policy)

Suffolk University expects all students to be responsible individuals with high standards of conduct. Students are expected to practice ethical behavior in all learning environments and scenarios, including classrooms and laboratories, internships and practica, and study groups and academic teams. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, use of unauthorized electronic devices, self-plagiarism, fabrication or falsification of data, and other types of academic misconduct are treated as serious offenses that initiate a formal process of inquiry, one that may lead to disciplinary sanctions.

Student work will be thoroughly examined for academic integrity and may be scanned using plagiarism detection software. A faculty member suspecting academic misconduct will contact the student using the Suffolk email address to schedule a meeting and will make all effort to do so within five business days of detecting the incident. During the meeting, the faculty member will present the documentation that led to suspected academic misconduct. Resolution of the incident will be according to the procedures outlined in the SUMC Student Handbook.

**Academic Grievances Policy:**

[www.suffolk.edu/student-life/student-services/student-handbook/university-policies-for-student-cas-sbs/grievances-academics](http://www.suffolk.edu/student-life/student-services/student-handbook/university-policies-for-student-cas-sbs/grievances-academics)

## **Course Schedule:**

The schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better student learning.

### **Part 1:**

- Introduction to Philosophy.
- What is Philosophy, why is it useful.
- What is philosophy not?
- When did it begin and what preceded it.
- The Pre-Socratics.
- Socrates
- Plato
- Aristotle
- Roman Philosophy.
- *Suggested Reading:* Mastering Philosophy: Ch 1, 1.1, 1.2 / Ch 3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 / Ch 4, 4.1, 4.10
- *Basic Readings:* 1, 2, 3 and 6.

### **Part 2:**

- From the Medieval Period to the Renaissance.
- The Medieval world: conditions and outlook.
- Augustine of Hippo.
- Thomas Aquinas
- Roger Bacon and his four causes of ignorance
- William of Ockham
- Erasmus
- Machiavelli
- *Suggested Reading:* Readings will be allotted in advance for this section.

### **Part 3:**

- The Scientific Revolution as a function of developments in epistemological criteria.
- Francis Bacon and Induction
- The doubtful Descartes.
- Empiricism.
- Scepticism and Hume
- Popper and Falsification
- Superstition, science, Russell's teapot, werewolves and thermodynamics.
- *Suggested Reading:* Mastering Philosophy: Ch 5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5 / Ch 8, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4
- *Basic Readings:* 5, 9, 12, 13, 35, 38, 42