

PHIL 11001: Introduction to Philosophy

Fall 2024, Section 001 (CRN 16233)

100% Online, Web-Based Asynchronous Course

Dr. Daniel E. Palmer

Department of Philosophy

Kent State University

Office: 320D Bowman Hall

Email: dpalmer1@kent.edu

Office Hours (via Microsoft Teams): Virtual appointments may be made with me for times that are convenient for your schedule (just send me an email requesting an appointment and when we have confirmed a day and time, I will send you a Teams meeting link). You can also see me in-person during my regularly scheduled office hours (just ask me if you wish to attend in-person office hours and I will let you know the times I am available).

Course Information

This is a fully online asynchronous course; as such, there are no designated meeting times and students are responsible for completing the material in each learning module on a weekly basis on their own (and are responsible for meeting all deadlines for assignments). It is thus particularly important that students read all of the information in the syllabus and the welcome material from the instructor included in the first weekly module so that they understand all course expectations. If students have any questions about the course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to the aims and methods of philosophical inquiry. In order to achieve this goal, we will closely examine a number of important texts from a variety of philosophical perspectives. In looking at these works our primary interest will be to develop our understanding and appreciation of the basic problems and questions of philosophy. As such, we will take up, among other things, such philosophical questions as: "What is the nature of human knowledge and what can I really know?," "Do we have an immaterial soul?," "What reasons can be given for or against believing in the existence of God?," and "What is the nature and purpose, if any, of human existence?" The emphasis will be on developing the ability of students to read philosophical texts critically, analyze philosophical arguments, and rationally articulate their own views on important philosophical topics.

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should acquire an appreciation of the nature of philosophy and of its basic issues. More specifically, by the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Recognize several subject areas of philosophy and articulate different philosophical methods.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to examine questions and issues from diverse philosophical perspectives.
- Demonstrate exposure to and knowledge of the main views and issues addressed by major figures from the history of philosophy.
- Present philosophical ideas, theories, and perspectives fairly, objectively, and critically.
- Articulate clearly and rationally their own views on important philosophical issues.

Kent Core: This course may be used to satisfy a Kent Core Humanities requirement. The Kent Core as a whole is intended to broaden intellectual perspectives, foster ethical and humanitarian values, and prepare students for responsible citizenship and productive careers.

Diversity Element: This course may be used to satisfy the University Diversity Requirement (Global). Diversity courses provide opportunities for students to learn about such matters as the history, culture, values, and notable achievements of people other than those of their own national origin, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability, and social class. Diversity courses also provide opportunities to examine problems and issues that may arise from differences, and opportunities to learn how to deal constructively with them.

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Requirements

Required Textbooks: 1. Cahn, Steven (ed.), *Classics of Western Philosophy*, 8th ed. (Hackett Publishing, 2012). ISBN: 9781603847438
 2. Additional reading materials for the course will be provided by the Instructor and available through the Canvas course website.

Students are responsible for obtaining the textbook before the beginning of the course. The text used in this course is relatively inexpensive and widely available. Students can obtain the textbook through the Kent State University bookstore or through online book selling sites such as Amazon.com. Students should be sure to get the appropriate editions of the text (use the ISBN number provided if you order the books from a site other than the KSU Bookstore to make sure that you get the correct edition).

Assignments:

Graded course assignments consist of discussion board responses, quizzes, and four exams (three during the course of the semester and a final, cumulative, exam). Information concerning the percentages that each assignment counts towards a student's grades can be found below

(along with the grading scale used in this class). Tentative dates for the exams can be found in the course schedule included with this syllabus. A grading rubric for the discussion board responses is provided in the first module (as well as an explanation of discussion board response expectations). Quizzes will consist of objective questions (True/False, multiple choice, etc.) as well as short answer questions covering basic concepts covered in the learning modules. Exams will consist of both objective and short answer questions as well as longer essay response questions.

Assignment Distribution and Grading Scale:

Method of Assessment	Number of Assessments	Total Points
Discussion Board Responses	6 (top five count) – 10 points each	50 Points
Quizzes	6 (top five count)- 20 Points Each	100 Points
Exams	4 Exams – 100 Points Each	400 Points
	Total Possible Points	550 Points

Grading Scale:

Percentage of Earned Points	Earned Points	Grade
93% -100%	509-550	A
90%-92%	495-508	A-
88%-89%	482-494	B+
83%-87%	454-481	B
80%-82%	440-453	B-
78%-79%	427-439	C+
73%-77%	399-426	C
70%-72%	385-398	C-
68%-69%	372-384	D+
60%-67%	330-371	D
Under 60%	329 and under	F

Getting Started in your Online Course

For any Kent State student taking an online course, there is online-specific information and resources available on the [Getting Started in your Online Course](#) web page. Throughout this syllabus, you may be directed to go to this page for more information, and will always be able to use the link referenced above.

Technology Requirements and Skills

Computer Hardware and Software

A personal computer with consistent, reliable Internet access is required, and must meet the following requirements:

1. A DSL or cable connection to the Internet; dial-up is not sufficient.
2. Laptop or desktop computer with a minimum of a 2 GHz processor and 2 GB of RAM

You should have the following software installed on your computer:

1. An actively supported operating system such as Windows 10 for PC computers OR Mac OS X 10.11 or newer for Apple Mac computers.
2. Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint).
3. Antivirus for Windows OS, Microsoft Security Essentials OR Antivirus for Mac OS, Sophos
4. A compatible browser, such as the latest version of Firefox, Chrome, or Safari. **Internet Explorer is NOT a supported browser and should not be used.**

Canvas

This class will use Canvas, the official learning management system (LMS) used by Kent State University to deliver course materials to university students. ALL course materials and activities will take place in Canvas. In order to login to the online Canvas LMS, you will need a Kent State FlashLine user ID and password.

- You can login to Canvas either through FlashLine or via a direct link to the login page: canvas.kent.edu

For Canvas Help, click the Help icon in the Global Navigation and “Search the Canvas Guides” or visit the “Canvas Student Guides” link on the homepage.

In general, Canvas works best using the latest version of most major web browsers, including Firefox, Chrome, and Safari.

Technology Help Guidelines

Kent State University offers 24/7 technology support to all students. For technical issues with your computer, any KSU-supported software, Canvas, FlashLine, and University email, please contact Information Services via phone, email, or Live Chat. More information, including contact information, is available on the [Information Services](#) web page. Students can access

tech help day or night by calling **330-672-HELP**.

30-Minute Rule: When you encounter struggles with technology, give yourself 30 minutes to 'figure it out.' If you cannot, contact the KSU Helpdesk 24/7. As a last resort, contact me. However, do not expect an immediate reply, and I cannot guarantee that I will be able to help with any and all technology issues.

When posting or sending email requesting help with technology issues, whether to the Helpdesk or me, use the following guidelines:

1. Include a descriptive title for the subject field that includes 1) the name of course 2) the issue. Do NOT just simply type "Help" into the subject field or leave it blank.
2. List the steps or describe the circumstance that preceded the technical issue or error. Include the exact wording of the error message.
3. When possible, always include a screenshot(s) demonstrating the technical issue or error message.
4. Also include what you have already tried to do to remedy the issue (rebooting, trying a different browser, etc.).

Policies and Expectations

Online Attendance Policy

Online courses are conducted on the premise that regular attendance requires students to log into the learning management system (LMS). Attendance is measured both by virtual presence in the online course and student interaction with course learning materials and assignments. Students are expected to check their Kent State e-mail and to log into their course several times during the week.

All actions by students in the LMS can be tracked. At any time during the course, an instructor may generate a report that indicates when and how long individual students have been logged into the LMS, or engaged with course materials or course tools.

Students who anticipate an absence from the course due to medical or other reasons should consult with the instructor individually. An absence due to illness or injury requires verification from a medical professional and should be presented to the instructor.

Communication with your Instructor

1. Email course questions and personal concerns, including grading questions, to me privately using your @kent.edu email. Do NOT submit posts of a personal nature to the discussion board. Email is the preferred method of contact, and will yield the fastest response. For a faster response, please send me a direct email.

2. Email will be checked at least once per day Monday through Friday, and at least once during the weekend. I will respond to all emails within 24 hours during the week, and within 48 hours during the weekend. If there are special circumstances that will delay my response, I will make an announcement to the class.
3. I will hold Virtual Office Hours on the hours indicated at the beginning of the syllabus. I am also happy to schedule one-on-one office hours as needed in person, via phone, via Teams, or through instant messenger.
4. One major way that I will communicate with you is via the Announcements tool. Announcements will also be sent out to your Kent State email by default. If you have changed your notification settings it is your responsibility to stay current on any announcements in the course. It is your responsibility to read all announcements, and to contact me should you have any questions or concerns regarding an announcement. I may also send you an individual, direct email about your work or progress in the course.

Online Student Conduct and (N)etiquette

Communicating appropriately in the online classroom can be challenging. In order to minimize this challenge, it is important to remember several points of “internet etiquette” that will smooth communication for both students and instructors:

1. **Read first, Write later.** Read the *entire* set of posts/comments on a discussion board before posting your reply, in order to prevent repeating commentary or asking questions that have already been answered.
2. **Avoid language that may come across as strong or offensive.** Language can be easily misinterpreted in written electronic communication. Therefore, please review email and discussion board posts before submitting to assess the tone. For example, humor and sarcasm may be easily misinterpreted, so they may be best to avoid. Also, do not write using all capital letters because it can be interpreted as yelling. Lastly, you may want to consider using emoticons when appropriate, which can be helpful in conveying nonverbal feelings. 😊
3. **Consider the privacy of others.** Ask permission prior to giving out a classmate's email address or other information. You are not to share anything from this class with others who are not in this class, including peer work, class discussions, or course materials. Similarly, do not communicate anything within this class that is confidential or private.
4. **Keep attachments small.** If it is necessary to send pictures, change the size to an acceptable size of 250kb or less (there are several programs you can use to do this such as: Photoshop, Paint, GIMP, and picresize.com).
5. **No inappropriate material.** Do not forward virus warnings, chain letters, jokes, etc. to classmates or instructors. The sharing of pornographic material is strictly forbidden.

NOTE: *The instructor reserves the right to remove posts that are not collegial in nature and/or do not meet the Online Student Conduct and Etiquette guidelines listed above.*

University Use of Electronic Email

A university-assigned student e-mail account is the official university means of communication with all students at Kent State University. Students are responsible for all information sent to them via their university-assigned e-mail account. If a student chooses to forward information in their university e-mail account, he or she is responsible for all information, including

attachments, sent to any other e-mail account. To stay current with university information, students are expected to check their official university e-mail account and other electronic communications on a frequent and consistent basis. Recognizing that some communications may be time-critical, the university recommends that electronic communications be checked minimally twice a week.

Course and University Policies, Procedures, and Resources

Course Deadlines and Absences: As this is an online asynchronous course, students are responsible for completing the course work in each learning module in a timely fashion. Generally speaking, all deadlines for discussion posts, quizzes, and exams will be strictly adhered to; if for some reason there is an emergency that requires an exception, please contact me as soon as possible so that I can evaluate the nature of the situation and determine whether it warrants an exception. I strongly suggest that students do not wait until the last minute to complete weekly assignments- plan ahead; that way if something happens, you will still have time to complete the material.

Request for Religious Accommodation: The University welcomes individuals from all different faiths, philosophies, religious traditions, and other systems of belief, and supports their respective practices. In compliance with University policy and the Ohio Revised Code, the University permits students to request class absences for up to three (3) days, per semester, in order to participate in organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or other religious or spiritual organization. Students will not be penalized as a result of any of these excused absences.

The request for excusal must be made, in writing, during the first fourteen (14) days of the semester and include the date(s) of each proposed absence or request for alternative religious accommodation. The request must clearly state that the proposed absence is to participate in religious activities. The request must also provide the particular accommodation(s) you desire.

You will be notified by me if your request is approved, or, if it is approved with modification. I will work with you in an effort to arrange a mutually agreeable alternative arrangement. For more information regarding this Policy you may contact the Student Ombuds (ombuds@kent.edu).

Students with Disabilities: Kent State University is committed to inclusive and accessible educational experiences for all students. University Policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to course content. Students with disabilities are encouraged to connect with Student Accessibility Services as early as possible to establish accommodations. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on a disability (including mental health, chronic medical conditions, or injuries), please let me know immediately. Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Contact Information:

Location: University Library, Suite 100

Email: sas@kent.edu

Phone: 330-672-3391; VP 330-968-0490

Web: www.kent.edu/sas

Diversity Statement: Kent State University is committed to the creation and maintenance of equitable and inclusive learning spaces. This course is a learning environment where all will be treated with respect and dignity, and where all individuals will have an equitable opportunity to succeed. The diversity that each student brings to this course is viewed as a strength and a benefit. Dimensions of diversity and their intersections include but are not limited to: race, ethnicity, national origin, primary language, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, mental and physical abilities, socio-economic status, family/caregiver status, and veteran status.

Basic Needs Support & Mental Well-being

Kent State University is committed to supporting the overall well-being of our students. This support may take the form of assisting students with basic needs such as food and housing. We recognize that the absence of secure housing and access to food makes it difficult for students to achieve their best in and out of the classroom. If you, or someone you know, are unable to afford groceries or lack a safe, secure, and reliable place to live, please visit the CARES Center basic needs resource website: <https://www.kent.edu/carescenter/basic-needs-resources>.

Mental health challenges may also make it difficult for students to reach their full potential. KSU's mental health and wellness resource page provides information on education and awareness, mental health services, and advocacy intervention. To learn more, please visit Kent State's mental health resources and support website at <https://www.kent.edu/mentalhealth>.

Kent Campus Academic Support Statement

Kent State recognizes many students face challenges and we are committed to supporting your academic journey when you need help. Whether you are struggling in a course, need help writing a paper or actively working to achieve your goals, use the resources below to start building your support system:

Where can I get help from another student who earned a good grade in this class?

Tutoring (www.kent.edu/asc/tutoring)

Where can I go if I need assistance with how to study and meet my academic goals?

Academic Coaching (www.kent.edu/coaching)

Who can review my writing and help me properly cite my work?

Writing Commons (www.kent.edu/writingcommons)

Where should I go when I don't know where to go?

Academic Advising (www.kent.edu/university-advising)

TRIO Student Support Services (www.kent.edu/studentsupportservices)

There may be additional resources, just ask!

Course Enrollment and Withdrawal: The official registration deadline for this course is 08/19/2024. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashLine) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline. The course withdrawal deadline is 10/27/24.

Statement on Academic Presence Verification: In compliance with federal regulations, the University is required to report that enrolled students have participated in at least one academically related activity. If no academic activity is submitted by the end of the fourth week of the semester (for a full-term course) then a grade of NF (Never attended F) will be assigned. The NF mark will count as an F in computing grade point averages. Students who have received an NF mark will lose their access to the course. To avoid an NF mark, students must participate in at least one academic activity as soon as possible and no later than the end of the fourth week.

Academic Honesty: University policy 3-01.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism. None of these will be tolerated in this class. The sanctions provided in this policy will be used to deal with any violations. If you have any questions, please read the policy at <http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-student-cheating-and-plagiarism> and/or ask your instructor.

Academic Complaint Policy: The Philosophy Department Grievance Procedure for handling student grievances is in conformity with the Student Academic Complaint Policy and Procedures set down as University Policy 4-02.3 in the University Policy Register. For information concerning the details of the grievance procedure, please see the departmental chairperson.

Notice of My Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights: Any intellectual property displayed or distributed to students during this course (including but not limited to handouts, quizzes, examinations, etc.) by the professor remains the intellectual property of the professor. This means that the student may not distribute, publish, or provide such intellectual property to any other person or entity for any reason, commercial or otherwise, without the express written permission of the professor.

*****Please Note:** The syllabus and course schedule may be subject to change. Changes will be communicated in class and via email. It is the responsibility of students to check email messages and pay attention to in-course announcements to stay current in the course.