

PHIL101 | Introduction to Philosophy

Course Text

No need to track down a textbook; this text is provided digitally as part of the course enrollment:

Moore, Brooke Noel and Kenneth Bruder. *Philosophy: The Power of Ideas*, 11th edition, McGraw-Hill, 2023.
ISBN: 9781264296118

Course Description

This course is a critical introduction to the discipline of philosophy. After defining philosophy and identifying the major fields of philosophical study, the course examines the history of Western intellectual thought, from the famous Greek philosophers up to the cutting-edge intellectuals of today. Along the way, the course delves into various thematic topics, including metaphysics, epistemology, free will and determinism, evil and the existence of God, personal identity, ethical values, and political philosophy. The course concludes with an analysis of different perspectives, including feminist philosophy and postcolonial thought.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Define and explain what philosophy is; describe the major branches of philosophical inquiry and their key questions
2. Engage in the activity of philosophizing; present, analyze, and evaluate philosophical ideas in writing
3. Discuss the main ideas of ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy
4. Examine the approaches of major philosophers to metaphysical problems
5. Analyze and evaluate the views of major philosophical thinkers on the nature of knowledge
6. Analyze and evaluate the ethical theories of influential philosophers
7. Analyze and evaluate the influential approaches to political philosophy
8. Examine the influential arguments regarding the existence of God
9. Examine the major themes and arguments of feminist philosophy
10. Analyze the key tenets of postcolonial thought in Africa, the Americas, and Asia

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for Introduction to Philosophy.

Academic Integrity Statement

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an honest, truthful and responsible manner. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and academic misconduct. Failure to comply with the Academic Integrity Policy can result in a failure and/or zero on the attempted assignment/examination, a removal from the course, disqualification to enroll in future courses, and/or revocation of an academic transcript.

Course Completion Policy

In order for a course to be considered complete, **all required coursework must be attempted, submitted, and graded.** Required coursework consists of graded assignments. Any Academic Integrity Policy violations may prevent a course from being considered complete.

Assessment Types

StraighterLine courses may include any combination of the assessment types described below. Review the descriptions to learn about each type, then review the Course Evaluation Criteria to understand how your learning will be measured in this course.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks test your mastery of course concepts. You have 3 attempts, and your highest score counts.

Note: Cumulative Benchmarks (final exams) only allow 1 attempt.

Capstones

Capstones are project-based assessments that help you apply concepts to real-world scenarios. You have 2 attempts, and your highest score counts.

Checkpoints

Checkpoints are quick knowledge checks on important course concepts. All are open-book, and most have 1-3 attempts.

AI Use-Case Policies

StraighterLine Capstone assessments operate under one of three AI Use-Case Policies. These designations are selected intentionally to support learners in developing digital literacy, ethical reasoning, and authentic communication skills. Each model requires students to engage meaningfully with the course outcomes while adhering to academic standards.

Independent Work Requirement: Capstones with this designation must be completed independently without using AI tools. The goal is for learners to showcase their own understanding and skills without AI assistance. Students are expected to generate and submit original work developed solely through their own reasoning and effort.

AI-Assisted Planning Option: Capstones with this designation may allow AI tools to support brainstorming and assessment planning. If allowed, students will be asked to document any AI assistance by noting how it informed their work. Documentation must be included within the assignment or in a designated reflection field. Examples include describing how an AI tool helped organize an outline, generate ideas, or surface sources for further exploration.

AI-Integration Requirement: Capstones with this designation require AI tools as part of the learning process. Students will be asked to reflect upon their AI interactions and AI contributions to the assessment. Reflections must include which tools were used, how they were used, and what insights students gained from the process. This promotes transparency, ethical use, and metacognitive skill-building.

Course Evaluation Criteria

Your score provides a percentage score and letter grade for each course. A passing percentage is 70% or higher.

There are a total of 1000 points in the course:

Assessment	Points	Learning Outcomes
Checkpoint 1: Introduction to Philosophy	3	1, 2
Checkpoint 2: The Pre-Socratics	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Checkpoint 3: Socrates and Plato	6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Checkpoint 4: Aristotle	3	2, 3, 4, 5
Capstone 1: Plato's Metaphysics	215	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Checkpoint 5: Philosophers of the Hellenistic and Christian Eras	3	2, 3, 4, 5
Benchmark 1: Checkpoints 1-5	175	1, 3, 4, 5
Checkpoint 6: The Rise of Modern Metaphysics and Epistemology	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Checkpoint 7: The 18th and 19th Centuries	3	2, 3, 4, 5
Checkpoint 8: The Continental Tradition	3	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Checkpoint 9: The Pragmatic and Analytic Traditions	3	2, 3, 5
Benchmark 2: Checkpoints 6-9	175	1, 3, 4, 5, 6
Checkpoint 10: Moral Philosophy	3	1, 2, 3, 6
Capstone 2: Comparing Three Ethical Theories	215	1, 2, 3, 6
Checkpoint 11: Political Philosophy	3	1, 2, 3, 7
Checkpoint 12: Philosophy and Belief in God	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 8
Checkpoint 13: Feminist Philosophy	3	1, 2, 3, 9
Checkpoint 14: Postcolonial Thought	3	1, 2, 3, 10
Benchmark 3: Checkpoints 10-14	175	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
Total	1000	

Course Roadmap

This roadmap provides an overview of the checkpoints and lessons covered in this course.

Checkpoint 1: Introduction to Philosophy

- Pre-Reading: What Do You Think?
- Chapter 1 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 1
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 2
- Supplemental Videos: Introduction to Philosophy and Philosophical Reasoning (Optional)
- Pathfinder: A Philosophical Toolkit
- Practice Quiz 1

Checkpoint 2: The Pre-Socratics

- Pre-Reading: What Do You Think?
- Chapter 3 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 3
- Supplemental Reading: Presocratic Philosophy (Optional)
- Supplemental Videos: The Pre-Socratics (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 2

Checkpoint 3: Socrates and Plato

- Pre-Reading: What Do You Think?
- Chapter 4 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 4
- Supplemental Videos: Socrates and Plato (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 3

Checkpoint 4: Aristotle

- Chapter 5 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 5
- Supplemental Reading: Aristotle (Optional)
- Supplemental Videos: Aristotle (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 4

Checkpoint 5: Philosophers of the Hellenistic and Christian Eras

- Pre-Reading: What Do You Think?
- Chapter 6 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 6
- Supplemental Videos: Hellenistic and Medieval Philosophy (Optional)
- Pathfinder: Natural Law Theory & U.S. Constitutional Theory
- Practice Quiz 5

Checkpoint 6: The Rise of Modern Metaphysics and Epistemology

- Pre-Reading: What Do You Think?
- Chapter 7 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 7
- Supplemental Videos: Early Modern Metaphysics and Epistemology (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 6

Checkpoint 7: The 18th and 19th Centuries

- Chapter 8 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 8
- Supplemental Videos: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 7

Checkpoint 8: The Continental Tradition

- Pre-Reading: What Do You Think?
- Chapter 9 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 9
- Supplemental Videos: The Twentieth Century: The Continental Tradition (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 8

Checkpoint 9: The Pragmatic and Analytic Traditions

- Chapter 10 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 10
- Supplemental Videos: The Twentieth Century: The Pragmatic and Analytic Traditions (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 9

Checkpoint 10: Moral Philosophy

- Pre-Reading: What Do You Think?
- Chapter 11 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 11
- Supplemental Videos: Moral Philosophy (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 10

Checkpoint 11: Political Philosophy

- Pre-Reading: What Do You Think?
- Chapter 12 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 12
- Supplemental Videos: Political Philosophy (Optional)
- Pathfinder: Five Main Ethical Frameworks
- Practice Quiz 11

Checkpoint 12: Philosophy and Belief in God

- Pre-Reading: What Do You Think?
- Chapter 14 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 14
- Supplemental Videos: Philosophy and Belief in God (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 12

Checkpoint 13: Feminist Philosophy

- Chapter 15 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 15
- Supplemental Videos: Feminist Philosophy (Optional)

- Practice Quiz 13

Checkpoint 14: Postcolonial Thought

- Chapter 17 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 17
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 18, pp. 515-523
- Supplemental Reading: Colonialism (Optional)
- Practice Quiz 14

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