

## INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY PHIL1001 SECTION 004

### Essentials

<b>Instructor</b>	Mariana Beatriz Noé (mbn2123@columbia.edu)
<b>Classes</b>	Mondays and Wednesdays 2:40-3:55 PM
<b>Classroom</b>	Hamilton Hall 413
<b>Office Hours</b>	Mondays 4-4:30 PM Wednesdays 4-4:30 PM Fridays 1-2 PM

### Course Description

The central purpose of this course is to introduce you to the discipline of philosophy. This course does not presuppose any prior knowledge of philosophy (*i.e.* there are no prerequisites for the course). That being said, prior experience in other philosophy classes and/or familiarity with some of the works will likely prove beneficial. This course *does require* the eagerness to question your own beliefs about the world.

The course introduces you to several philosophical sub-fields, including metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, political philosophy, moral psychology, and aesthetics. We also read authors from different times and places—but neither chronological order nor geographical location dictates the organization of the class. Instead, this class is organized around Nietzsche’s “How the “true world” finally became a fable - The History of an Error.” In this one-page manifesto, Nietzsche presents the history of philosophy as a history of an *error*. This class guides you through all the “errors” of philosophy and we will reflect on the presumed “mistakes,” the relevant questions, arguments, and proposals. To know more, see the “Schedule” that I include on this syllabus.

Skill-wise, this class is designed to teach you three general philosophical skills: to speak thoughtfully, think creatively, and write with precision. To know more, read the “Learning Goals” of the class (below).

Philosophy completely changed the way in which I see the world. I hope this class does the same for you.

### Required Materials

You can find all the required articles, chapters, and supplementary readings on our CourseWorks page (see Files > Texts). We will also read the following books:

- Plato, *Republic* (Hackett, translated by Grube, revised by Reeve)<sup>1</sup>
- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford WC, translated by Ross, revised by Brown)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/12461598>

<sup>2</sup> <https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/14137357?counter=2>

- Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy* (Broadview Press, translated by Johnston)<sup>3</sup>

- Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford WC)<sup>4</sup>

The remaining readings are already uploaded to CourseWorks.

The books listed above can be purchased as print or digital copies through the [Columbia University Bookstore](#), [Book Culture](#), etc. Digital and print copies of most books can be borrowed from Butler Library using the online library catalog, and digital editions can also be rented from the Columbia University Bookstore. I provide the CLIO links for most of the books but be aware of the following facts:

- (a) Not all books are accessible through Butler Library.
- (b) Some books might be available only for a short period of time a day.
- (c) Some books can be borrowed only by one person at a time.

Now, I know that buying all the books is not an option for many of you. In that case, please do have in mind that Columbia and Barnard students who identify as first-generation, low-income students can use [Columbia's](#) or [Barnard's](#) "First-Generation, Low-Income" (FLI) Partnership Libraries. Please visit their website for more information about how to borrow from the FLI Library's collection of digital and print copies of books, and a guide to other low-cost options. If you still have any difficulty obtaining the required texts, please contact me.

### Schedule

#### 1) Sept 7

Nietzsche, "How the "true world" finally became a fable - The History of an Error"

**1. The true world — attainable for the sage, the pious, the virtuous man; he lives in it, he is it.**

#### 2) Sept 12

Heraclitus, Fragments

#### 3) Sept 14

Heraclitus, Fragments

#### 4) Sept 19

Parmenides, Fragments

#### 5) Sept 21

Parmenides, Fragments

Plato, *Republic* I

#### 6) Sept 26

Plato, *Republic* II-III (until 392c)

#### 7) Sept 28 [Ungraded 1-Page Essay Due]

Plato *Republic* IV

#### 8) Oct 3

Plato *Republic* VI-VII (until 521c)

<sup>3</sup> <https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/10394175?counter=1>

<sup>4</sup> <https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/14071153?counter=3>

9) Oct 5

Plato, *Republic* X  
Aristotle, *Poetics* I-VI

10) Oct 10

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I

11) Oct 12

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* II (1-6)

**2. The true world — unattainable for now, but promised for the sage, the pious, the virtuous man ("for the sinner who repents").**

12) Oct 17

Augustine, *On the Trinity*, XV.3

Augustine, *On the Trinity*, X

13) Oct 19 [1st Graded 3-Page Essay Due]

Augustine, *On the Trinity*, X

**3. The true world — unattainable, indemonstrable, unpromisable; but the very thought of it — a consolation, an obligation, an imperative.**

14) Oct 24

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, "Preface A" and "Preface B"

15) Oct 26

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, "Introduction A"

16) Oct 31

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, "Introduction B"

17) Nov 2

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, "Introduction B"

18) Nov 9

Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, "Preface" and "First Section"

**4. The true world — unattainable? At any rate, unattained. And being unattained, also unknown. Consequently, not consoling, redeeming, or obligating: how could something unknown obligate us?**

19) Nov 14

Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, 1st and 2nd meditation

20) Nov 16

Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, 3rd and 4th meditation

21) Nov 21

Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Sections I-III

22) Nov 28

Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Sections IV-V

**5. The "true" world — an idea which is no longer good for anything, not even obligating — an idea which has become useless and superfluous — consequently, a refuted idea: let us abolish it!**

23) Nov 30 [2nd Graded 3-Page Essay Due]

Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, "Reason in Philosophy"

**6. The true world — we have abolished. What world has remained? The apparent one perhaps? But no! With the true world we have also abolished the apparent one.**

24) Dec 5

Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, "1. Introduction: Rhizome"

25) Dec 7

Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, “1. Introduction: Rhizome”

26) Dec 12

[Exit Interview Day]

Finals Week) Dec 19

[3rd Graded 3-Page Essay Due]

### Learning Goals

Our class has three learning objectives. By the end of the semester, students will have improved their ability to speak thoughtfully, think creatively, and write with precision. Assessments are geared toward these skills.

*What does “speak thoughtfully” mean?* It means that you clearly state what you think, in an organized and precise manner. When you interact with others, you engage with their point of view and listen to them charitably. If you disagree, you first point out the idea (not the person) that you don’t agree with and you explain why. If someone else points to a problem in the view you hold, you take the time to consider it.

*Training and assessment:* in class **Participation** (which requires **Attendance**) trains you to elaborate arguments on the spot. The **Exit Interview** at the end of the semester tests your argumentative skills in the context of a conversation (with me, one-on-one, 4 questions about the topics covered in class).

*What does “think creatively” mean?* It means that you read the texts with care and understand what they state (and what they don’t). You analyze the proposals with care and check that they are coherent, convincing, useful, insightful. For any text, you are able to come up with a further example, argument in favor, objection, question.

*Training and assessment:* you have to answer 10 pieces of **Door Homework**. I post them online a few days before class and they are due 2 hours before class. They are usually question about the content of the text we are going to discuss in class. This analytical skill is put into work in the **3-Page Essays**.

*What does “precise writing” mean?* It means that you can state your interpretation clearly and concisely (brief but comprehensive) at the beginning of your essays, that you can follow with arguments in favor of your interpretation, respond to objections to your interpretation, and finish by recapitulating your interpretation (and adding a further insight or advantage of your interpretation that others do not have).

*Training and assessment:* the **Ungraded 1-Page Essay** gives you the opportunity to write your first argument. I provide a substantial amount of feedback here, in order to prepare you for the **3-Page Essays** that are graded.

**Rubrics**

<b>Final Rubric</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9.75</b>	<b>9.50</b>	<b>9.25</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8.75</b>	<b>8.50</b>	<b>8.25</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6 or less</b>
	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F

<b>Attendance (1 pt total)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.25</b>
	You attend all classes or 2 excused absences	1 unexcused absence	2 unexcused absences	3 unexcused absences
Excused absences: for religious reasons (let me know beforehand please) and medical reasons (keep me posted)				

<b>Thoughtful Speaking (2 pts total)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.25</b>
Participation	At least once per week you ask questions in class, share ideas, come up with examples, respond to others	Once every two weeks you ask questions in class, share ideas, come up with examples, respond to others	Once every three weeks you ask questions in class, share ideas, come up with examples, respond to others	Once every four weeks you ask questions in class, share ideas, come up with examples, respond to others
Exit Interview	You answer correctly the 4 questions	You answer correctly 3 questions	You answer correctly 2 questions	You answer correctly 1 question

<b>Creative Thinking (1 pts total)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.25</b>
Door Homework	You complete all homework assignments	You miss 1 homework assignment	You miss 2 homework assignments	You miss 3 homework assignments
Door Homework is due online, 2 hours before class. Go to the Discussions tab on Courseworks to post your answer.				

Precise Writing (6 pts total)	2	1.75	1.50	1.25	1	0.75	0.50
1-page essay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1st 3-page essay	Only 1 minor correction	Only 2 minor corrections	1 major correction or 3 minor corrections	2 major corrections or 4 minor corrections	3 major corrections or 5 minor corrections	4 major corrections or 6 minor corrections	5 major corrections or 7 minor corrections
2nd 3-page essay	Only 1 minor correction	Only 2 minor corrections	1 major correction or 3 minor corrections	2 major corrections or 4 minor corrections	3 major corrections or 5 minor corrections	4 major corrections or 6 minor corrections	5 major corrections or 7 minor corrections
3rd 3-page essay	Impeccable essay, not one correction	Only 1/2 minor corrections	1 major correction or 3 minor corrections	2 major corrections or 4 minor corrections	3 major corrections or 5 minor corrections	4 major corrections or 6 minor corrections	5 major corrections or 7 minor corrections

### Academic Honesty and Integrity

Columbia College is dedicated to the highest ideals of integrity in academia. Therefore, in Literature Humanities and Contemporary Civilization, any instance of academic dishonesty, attempted or actual, will be reported to the faculty chair of the course and to the dean of the Core Curriculum, who will review the case with the expectation that a student guilty of academic dishonesty may receive the grade of “F” in the course and be referred to dean's discipline for further institutional action.

On each assignment, paper, and exam, you must affirm that you have upheld the Honor Code, which reads as follows: “I affirm that I will not plagiarize, use unauthorized materials, or give or receive illegitimate help on assignments, papers, and examinations. I will also uphold equity and honesty in the evaluation of my work and the work of others. I do so to sustain a community built around this Code of Honor.”

### Academic Accommodations

Any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to receive a letter outlining the accommodations to which they are entitled. Contact information for ODS can be found in the next section.

### Student Resources and Services

*The Writing Centers*

<https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-center>

[uwp@columbia.edu](mailto:uwp@columbia.edu) or (212) 854-3886

<https://barnard.mywconline.com/>

*Academic Success Programs*

<http://www.studentaffairs.columbia.edu/asp>

asp@columbia.edu or (212) 854-3514

<https://barnard.edu/special-academic-programs-experiences>

*Counseling and Psychological Services*

<https://health.columbia.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services>

Emergencies: (212) 854-2878

Columbia: (212) 854 2284

Barnard (212) 854-2092

*Disability Services*

<https://health.columbia.edu/disability-services>

disability@columbia.edu or (212) 854 2388

<https://barnard.edu/disability-services>

*Mindfulness Resources*

<https://quietkit.com/> (basic meditations)

<https://chrisgermer.com/meditations/> (small variety of meditations)

<https://insighttimer.com/> (55000 free meditations + sleep aids + anxiety tools)

*Sexual Violence Response for Students*

<https://www.health.columbia.edu/content/sexual-violence-response>

*Suicide Prevention Lifeline*

For 24/7 free and confidential support call 988. A trained crisis worker will answer the phone. This person will listen to you, understand how your problem is affecting you, provide support, and get you the help you need.

<https://988lifeline.org/>

Chat online: [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat)