

PHIL 1560 - Introduction to Philosophy

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 02, CRN 43041,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

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Public Instructor Information

Professor: Alan Tomhave

Professional Qualifications:

Ph.D., Philosophy, University of Missouri

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Course Description

1560. Introduction to Philosophy. The nature of philosophy and its relation to science, religion, and art; study of the philosophical approach and attitude, the basic problem areas in philosophy, and some typical philosophical viewpoints. 3 s.h.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The Broadview Introduction to Philosophy	Andrew Bailey, editor	978-1-55481-382-7
Required	The Value of Philosophy, distributed via Blackboard	Bertrand Russell	N/A
Required	Fear and Trembling, excerpt, distributed via Blackboard	Soren Kierkegaard	N/A
Required	Computing Machinery and Intelligence, distributed via Blackboard	Alan Turing	Article
Required	Minds, brains, and programs, distributed via Blackboard	John Searle	Article

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
8/24	No reading. Notes on BB, Optional Reading: XVI-XXI	Course Introduction and Logic Primer	Review Logic Primer notes
8/31	Russell—The Value of Philosophy (Blackboard) Clifford—The Ethics of Belief (p99)	The Value of Philosophy	Thesis for each reading Friday, I will give an explanation of the Argument Papers.
9/7	Descartes—Meditations 1 and 2 (p134)	What do we know?	Thesis due



9/14	GE Moore—Proof of an External World (p206) Plato—The Allegory of the Cave (p128)	What do we know?	Thesis for each reading
9/21	Anselm—Proslogion (p3-8, Optional: 8-17) Aquinas—Summa Theologiae (p19)	Does God exist? Is belief in God rational?	Thesis for each reading
9/28	Paley—Natural Theology (p50) JL Mackie—Evil and Omnipotence, (p72)	Does God exist? Is belief in God rational?	Thesis for each reading AP1 due Sept 30 at 11:59pm
10/5	Kierkegaard—Fear and Trembling (Blackboard)	Does God exist? Is belief in God rational?	Thesis due
10/12	William James—The Will to Believe (p108)	Does God exist? Is belief in God rational?	Thesis due Midterm due Oct 16 @ 5pm
10/19	Ship of Theseus (Blackboard—this reading is only a sentence long) Dennett—Where Am I? (p504)	What makes you the same you that you were yesterday, assuming that you are? Personal Identity	Thesis due
10/26	Parfit—Personal Identity (p515) Turing (Blackboard)	What makes you the same you that you were yesterday, assuming that you are? Personal Identity Can computer think? AI	Thesis for each reading AP 2 due Oct 31 at 11:59pm
11/2	Searle (Blackboard) Chisholm, p398	Can computer think? AI Are we free and morally responsible?	Thesis for each reading
11/9	AJ Ayer—Freedom and Necessity (p438) Frankfurt—Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility (p445)	Are we free and morally responsible?	Thesis for each reading
11/16	Epictetus—Enchiridion (p975) Sartre—Existentialism is a Humanism (p992)	Existentialism	Thesis for each reading
11/23	Camus—The Myth of Sisyphus (p1004) No reading for the ethics overview	Existentialism Ethics	Thesis for reading
11/30	Continuing ethics overview-no reading Marquis—Why Abortion is Immoral (p687) Thomson—A Defense of Abortion (p701)	Ethics The ethics of abortion	AP3 due Nov 30 at 11:59pm Thesis for each reading Final quiz on Friday, Dec 4, in class
12/7			AP4 due Dec 7 at 11am Final will be due Friday, December 11 at 10am

The course 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 learning.