**PHILOSOPHY 104  
Introduction to Philosophy, Writing Intensive**

**Spring 2022**

**Lectures MW 2-3:20 in Voorhees 105 (on Zoom via Canvas through Jan 31)**

**Discussion Sections: various**

**Professor Karen Bennett**

kbennett@philosophy.rutgers.edu

106 Somerset St., #513

Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:30-4:30, and by appointment

For now, these are on zoom. Later, there will be in person office hours.

Zoom info for Karen Bennett's Personal Meeting Room

https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/9247877399?pwd=Sm9QdVl3VlJpS1Rva3BaQy9sSlZ6QT09

Meeting ID: 924 787 7399

Password: 989990

Join by SIP: 9247877399@zoomcrc.com

Join By Phone: +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

**Teaching Assistants**

Mia Accomando [mla149@scarletmail.rutgers.edu](mailto:mla149@scarletmail.rutgers.edu) sections 01 and 04 (T 12:10 and T 5:40)

Patrick Brooks [pnb27@philosophy.rutgers.edu](mailto:pnb27@philosophy.rutgers.edu) sections 06 and 10 (T 10:20 and T 12:10)

Ronny Fernandez [rf476@philosophy.rutgers.edu](mailto:rf476@philosophy.rutgers.edu) sections 02 and 03 (W 10:20 and W 12:10)

Hazel Mitchley [hazel.mitchley@rutgers.edu](mailto:hazel.mitchley@rutgers.edu) sections 07 and 09 (M 7:30 and W 10:20)

**This is intended to be an in-person synchronous class, even though we will start remotely, as per Rutgers current Operating Status. Lectures and discussion sections will be synchronously broadcast on Zoom, accessible through the Canvas site. Fingers crossed that we will see each other in Voorhees 105 at the start of February!**

This course is an introduction to philosophy in the Western tradition. It meets three SAS Core Curriculum requirements: WCr, WCd, and AHo.

**Learning Goals**

• Acquaint students with some of the important positions and arguments on several central questions in Western philosophy. Critically examine philosophical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production. [**[AHo]**](https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/degree-requirements/core/areas-of-inquiry-arts-and-humanities#AHo)

* Effectively communicate philosophical ideas and arguments; evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights [**[WCd]**](https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/degree-requirements/core/cognitive-skills-and-processes-writing-and-communication#WCd)
* Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience, and respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, &/or supervisors through successive drafts & revision. [**[WCr]**](https://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/degree-requirements/core/cognitive-skills-and-processes-writing-and-communication#WCr)

• Improve students’ skills at a) identifying and articulating arguments in texts, b) analyzing and criticizing those arguments, and c) explaining and defending their own philosophical views.

**Course Format**:

Philosophy 104 involves both lecture and discussion section. Everyone in the course will attend two lectures each week, given by Professor Bennett on Mondays and Wednesday from 2-3:20 in Voorhees 105 (though we will be on Zoom through the end of January). In addition, each student is assigned to a discussion section led by a teaching assistant. There are 8 discussion sections. It is important that you know which section you are signed up for, and that you attend the correct section. Check your class schedule if you are unsure.

**Required Texts**

• *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 9th edition, edited by John Perry, Michael Bratman, and John Fischer. Available at the Rutgers bookstore.

NOTE: Page numbers refer to the 9th edition. However, almost everything is in cheaper earlier editions as well. If you buy a used copy of an earlier edition, you are responsible for figuring out the appropriate page numbers.

• Other articles available on Canvas, marked with an asterisk.

**Canvas:** [**https://canvas.rutgers.edu**](https://canvas.rutgers.edu)

Canvas is the home page for the course. The syllabus and announcements are posted there, papers and other assignments will be turned in there, readings not in the book are posted there. It contains the link to Zoom for the synchronous lectures for the beginning of the semester, as we start remotely, and recordings of the handful of asynchronous lectures later in the term.

**Recommended Online Resources**

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: http://plato.stanford.edu

Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy: http://www.rep.routledge.com

The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy: (google it; the address is too long to put here)

Website for the Philosophy Talk public radio show: http://www.philosophytalk.org

***Note: you must cite these resources if you consult them for papers.***

**Evaluation**

*• Weekly assignments, discussion section attendance, and participation: 15%*

This portion of your grade will reflect your active participation in the course. Half of it will be settled by attendance and participation in your discussion section (primary) and office hours or other participation outside of class (secondary). The other half will be determined by small weekly assignments set by your TA, such as answering a brief question or two or contributing to an online discussion forum. While the details will vary by section, these weekly assignments are intended to only take about 10-20 minutes. These will simply be marked as complete or incomplete.

• *Exams: 20%*

We will have an in-class midterm and final exam. The final will not be cumulative, but only cover material in the second half of the course. The exams will draw largely from lecture, will be part T/F, multiple choice, and short answer, and will include 1 or 2 essay questions (you will have some choice). The midterm will be **in class on March 7**; the final will be during the time slot scheduled by the registrar’s office (not yet available at the time of writing).

• *Writing assignments: 65%*

You will complete four writing assignments for this course. The first is very short, purely expository, and only worth 5% of your grade. The second assignment is a philosophical dialogue, worth 15% of your grade.

The final two writing assignments will be 5-7 page argumentative papers. Because Philosophy 104 meets SAS Core Curriculum Requirement WCr, these will be due in three stages: a “prewrite”, a first draft, and a final draft. The prewrite will not be given feedback, but simply scored as either 0 or 100 to reflect complete/incomplete, and will count for 2.5% of your grade. The first drafts *will* be graded and commented upon; they are worth 5% of your overall grade. If you do not turn in a draft, or if you do not revise in light of the comments you receive, you will get a 0 for this portion of the grade. The final drafts will be graded and worth 15%. (Adding up the stages, the third and fourth papers are worth 22.5% apiece in total.)

**Grading Policies**

1. Extensions can be granted on papers, but you have to talk to your TA a few days in advance. If you do not make arrangements beforehand, late papers will be downgraded by 1/3 letter grade per day.
2. The small weekly assignments cannot be made up. They are intended to keep you engaged with the course throughout the course. However, missing up to two will not affect your grade.
3. To pass this class, you must complete all four papers and take the midterm and non-cumulative final.

**Notes on Academic Integrity**

1. Every student is required to adhere to Rutgers’ Academic Integrity Policy:

http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/home/academic-integrity-policy/

It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with this policy, and what constitutes a violation of it. All work submitted must be your own, and all sources must be properly cited. Changing a few words from an online source does not make the material your own. Wikipedia should be avoided but must be cited if used.

1. All papers will be submitted to Turnitin.com (via Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. Further, all papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of [Turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com/) service is subject to the usage policy posted on the [Turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com/) site.
2. Students are not permitted to buy or sell any course materials, online or otherwise. This includes handouts, paper topics, homework questions, slides, etc. Such behavior constitutes academic misconduct.

**Tentative Schedule of Readings**

*All readings are in the 9th edition of the Perry/Bratman/Fischer anthology unless they are marked with an asterisk (\*). Readings so marked are available in the “readings” section of the Canvas site. Note that almost all of the readings are also in earlier editions of the anthology.*

***0. Introduction***

**1/19 SYNCHRONOUS REMOTE**

Perry, Bratman, and Fischer, “Introduction,” 1-7

Perry, Bratman, and Fischer, “Logical Toolkit,” first 3 sections (rest is optional, or might be assigned by your TA), 8-10

***1. The Existence of God***

**1/24 SYNCHRONOUS REMOTE**

Aquinas, “The Existence of God” (from *Summa Theologica*), just the paragraph on 55 starting “the second way derives…”

\*Russell, “Why I am Not a Christian,” just the section called ‘The First Cause Argument’.

**1/26 ASYNCHRONOUS REMOTE**

**\***Pascal, “The Wager,” sections 231-241

**1/31 SYNCHRONOUS REMOTE**

Continued (no new reading assigned)

2/2 Leibniz, “God, Evil, and the Best of All Possible Worlds,” 104-105

\*Voltaire, *Candide*, chapters 1 and 28

**2/5 Paper 1 due to Canvas by noon – this is a *Saturday***

2/7 \*Mackie, “Evil and Omnipotence”

2/9continued

Adams, selection from “Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God,” sections 4.0, 4.1, and 4.2 only

*Optional: Antony, “For the Love of Reason,” 148-160; \*Sullivan, “Uneasy Grace”*

***2. Freedom of the Will***

2/14 \*van Inwagen, excerpt from “The Powers of Rational Beings: Freedom of the Will”, pp. 202-205 only

\*Holbach, “The Illusion of Free Will”

**2/16 ASYNCHRONOUS LECTURE**

**Paper 2 due**

**\***Stace, “The Problem of Free Will”

**Interlude: Writing:**

**2/21 3rd paper topics made available**

Perry, Bratman, and Fischer, “Writing Philosophy Papers,” 26-28

\*Bennett, “Some Helpful Hints for Writing Philosophy Papers”

\*Lenman, “How to Write a Crap Philosophy Essay”

*Optional: \*Pryor, “Guidelines for Writing a Philosophy Paper”*

**2/23 Paper #3 prewrite due**

Frankfurt, “Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person,” 440-449

2/28 Chisholm, “Human Freedom and the Self,” 398-405

van Inwagen, another part of “The Powers of Rational Beings”: (p. 210, “Let us look carefully…” to the end.)

***3. Ethics***

**3/2 paper 3 draft due**

introduction; no reading assigned

**3/7 midterm**

**3/9** \*Rachels, “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism”

**Spring Break**

~~3/21 Bentham, “The Principle of Utility,” 481-484~~

~~Carritt, “Criticisms of Utilitarianism,” 502-504~~

**3/23 paper 3 drafts back to students**

Bentham, “The Principle of Utility,” 481-484

Carritt, “Criticisms of Utilitarianism,” 502-504

3/28 Smart, “Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism”

**3/30 paper 3 final version due**

continued; Kant, from *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 520-536

4/4 Kant continued

**4/6 paper 4 topics out**

\*Nagel, “Moral Luck”

**4/8 paper 4 prewrite due (this is a Friday)**

4/11 Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality,” 512-519

*Optional: O’Neill, “Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems,” 600-606*

**4/13 no class; asynchronous lecture instead** \*Wolf, “Moral Saints”

**4/15 paper 4 first draft due (this is a Friday)**

***4. Death and the Meaning of Life***

4/18 \* Philip Larkin, “Aubade” (a poem)

\* Epicurus, “Letter to Menoeceus”

\* Lucretius, selection from Book 3 of *On the Nature of Things*

4/20 Nagel, “Death,” 699-704

**4/25 paper 4 drafts returned to students**

\*Williams, “The Makropulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of Immortality”

4/27 Wolf, “The Meanings of Lives,” 687-698

*Optional: Taylor, “The Meaning of Human Existence,” 670-686*

**5/2 Paper 4 final version due**

Nagel, “The Absurd,” 662-69

Russell, “The Value of Philosophy,” 29-32