

SYLLABUS
Self: East and West
21:730:382
Spring 2018
Professor Katalin Balog

Prerequisite: 730:103.

Class location: Life Science Center 103

Meeting time: Monday-Wednesday 4:00-5:20pm

Office: Philosophy Department, Conklin Hall, Room 409

Office phone: 973-353-1397

Office hours: Wednesdays 2:45-3:45 and by appointment.

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[Instructor homepage](#)

This course is an investigation into how we *do*, and how we *should* conceive of ourselves as persons. The first investigation depends on who we *think* we are while the second explores who we *really* are.

In addition to becoming familiar with these and other issues, we have another, more general goal in this class: to build up your ability to think critically and deeply, and to internalize this skill so that you can apply it to any subject matter whatsoever. One of the most important features distinguishing philosophy from other academic disciplines is that it is a *skill* and not just a body of knowledge. Accordingly, the assessments (in-class exams) in the course will all involve essay questions requiring answers of varying length. In addition to these, you will prepare an oral presentation, and write two short papers for the course during the semester.

Philosophy is studied by many people who later on go into a different carrier (some famous philosophy majors: Woody Allen, Stephen Colbert, Ethan Coen). It is often studied for its own sake, to engage with some of the most profound questions about what it is to be a human being in the world – but sometimes it is studied for the many skills that the study of philosophy helps develop. Here is a very informative web-site about reasons to study philosophy:

<https://sites.google.com/site/whystudyphilosophy/>

Academic Freedom

In keeping with the ideals of reflection and critical thought, in our classroom you have the right to engage in reasoned disagreement with me without any penalty to your grade. I have the right to challenge any belief, ideology, worldview, or attitude you have, including those beliefs you hold sacred. Students likewise have this right against each other and me. Everyone has the right to express his or her views without fear of bullying or reprisal. The classroom and the university is a forum for the pursuit of truth.

Office hours: Office hour meetings are walk-ins. E-mail me in advance for appointments. Individual paper and grade questions will typically be brought to office meetings. You are also

welcome to meet me in the office to give me your feedback on any course related matter or to just discuss philosophy!

Blackboard: once you registered for the class you can go to Blackboard and select the course “The Self: East and West, 730:382”. The page will contain course-related information, viz., syllabus, current schedule of readings, study questions, announcements, assignments, readings, and more. You need to have access to Blackboard to participate in the course. Among the most important documents are *Current Schedule of Readings* and *Study questions*, located under Course Documents, both of which will be regularly updated. *It is very important that you check your email and Current Schedule before you start preparing for class. It is highly encouraged that shortly after class you start working with the study questions for that section.* This will facilitate engagement with the material and you can also avoid stressful last-minute cramming. Study questions for the current readings will be typically posted right before or right after class.

You are responsible for making sure your Rutgers email address Blackboard has on file for you works and that my messages via Blackboard reach you. Failure to do so will mean missing vital information affecting your progress in the class.

Preparing for class: expect to do about 15-20 pages of reading for each class. Reading philosophy is difficult and takes longer than reading many other kinds of texts. Lines of reasoning will be missed unless you give them your full attention. Therefore it is a good idea to write down your questions while reading the assignments, to ask them later during class, or an office hour. After class I will post study questions for the material covered that day; *it is a good idea to review what you have learned* with the help of the study questions right after class. This way you retain more of the material and you maximize the efficiency of your study time. All in all, you should spend at least 3-4 hours preparing for the course every week.

Here are some recommended links to consult repeatedly during the semester:

a) help you with your class preparation:

[Jim Pryor’s guide to reading philosophy](#)

b) help you understand what makes for a good philosophical argument:

[Jim Pryor’s philosophical terms and methods](#)

c) guide you in the process of writing a philosophy paper:

[Jim Pryor’s guide to writing philosophy](#)

Some helpful philosophy links to find out more about terms and topics discussed in class:

[Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)

[Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) =

[Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) (you need to be logged into the Rutgers Library system)

<http://www.askphilosophers.org/>

For a *tentative schedule of readings*, please go to course documents. The document, conveniently called “Schedule of readings” will have the most up-to-date readings. It will change frequently depending on the speed we proceed on the class, and on what we want to follow up on. **Please check the “Schedule of readings” before you start preparing for each class.**

Some Ground Rules for the Course:

- 1) Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class.
- 2) Your oral participation is strongly encouraged. You will only be able to participate if you have done the reading so I will ask students questions about the reading at the beginning of each class. Class discussions will be better for everyone if students are well prepared.

Required course-work:

- 1) class participation
- 2) 3 oral presentations
- 3) Random in-class quizzes (all in all 10 of them – if you have an unexcused absence that day you won’t get credit for the quiz)
- 4) 2 in-class exams.
- 5) Term paper

Class participation:

Attendance is not optional; to maintain the energy of the classroom full participation is expected from each student. Obtaining permission, in advance, for an absence, is encouraged. Staying in good communication is very important, especially if you struggle keeping up for any reason whatsoever.

Participation means reading all of the assigned materials and being prepared for discussion and debate. I will introduce the discussions, but will rely on students to provide additional insights, to discuss and debate.

In addition, I will take attendance in each class. You will get a free pass on 3 unexplained absences. After that, any unexplained absence will lower your grade by 3%.

Oral presentations:

You will give 3 short (5-10 minute) oral presentations on class readings of your choice. It is meant to be an in-depth critical exposition of the material (or a portion of the material) we are reading for the class that day.

Quizzes: there will be 10 unannounced pop-quizzes on the reading for the day.

In-Class Exams: exam questions will be chosen from the study questions posted up to the date of the quiz. *No Make-up Quizzes are given.* The only accepted reasons for missing a quiz are: (1) illness documented by a doctor’s note; (2) a university sponsored activity taking place at the time the assignment is due; (3) family crisis with proper documentation provided.

Term paper: you will write an 8-10 page paper on the topic of your choice (as long as it relates to course material and readings, the topic will be approved). Suggested topics will also be provided and updated as the semester progresses.

Grading:

<i>Participation (attendance, in-class contributions):</i>	10%
<i>Oral presentations:</i>	10%
<i>Quizzes:</i>	10%
<i>Exams:</i>	40%(20% each)
<i>Term paper:</i>	30%

94-100 = A
90-93=A-
85-89= B+
80-84=B
75-79= C+
70-74=C
56-69=D
55 or below=F

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:

The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as the representation of the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic work. Intentionally committing plagiarism is a serious offense with severe consequences. Instructors are required to report students who intentionally violate this policy to the department chairperson and to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. The most common forms of plagiarism are:

- Quoting directly or paraphrasing without acknowledging the source (this includes copying or paraphrasing material from a web site without providing a proper citation for the site)
- Presenting the work of another as one’s own
- Submitting purchased materials such as term papers
- Receiving unauthorized help on exams

The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy establishes levels of violations and recommends sanctions. Depending upon the severity of the case and the level of the violation, the sanctions for these violations include: a failing grade for the assignment, failure in the course, mandatory participation in a series of noncredit academic integrity workshops, academic probation, and/or suspension.

(If you are in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism or are concerned that you are misappropriating someones words or ideas, speak immediately with your instructor. For more information, you can also consult the University Code of Student Conduct or the Student Judicial Affairs website <http://judicialaffairs.rutgers.edu>.)

Special situations:

If you have a special situation concerning learning needs that either requires accommodation, or that you would simply like me to know about, please contact me as soon as possible. I will make every effort to aid you.

Rutgers abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008, and Sections 504 and 508 which mandate reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and the accessibility of online information. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please contact me early in the semester so that I can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations you may need. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disability Services, the designated office on campus to provide services and administer exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services is located in the Robeson Student Center. I look forward to talking with you soon to learn how I may be helpful in supporting your academic success in this course.

For more information on disability services at Rutgers, go to <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/applying-for-services>.

Religious Holiday Policy:

Please provide timely notification about necessary absences for religious observances. You are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule.