

(SAMPLE SYLLABUS)

Honors Thesis in Philosophy (PHI 4972) 3 credit hours

Instructor: [To be determined]

Office: [To be determined]

Contact Information: [To be determined]

Office Hours: [To be determined]

Textbook Required:

The textbook(s) for this course will be determined by the faculty thesis advisor, once the thesis project has been discussed and approved by the department

Credit Hours, Course Pre-Requisites, and Role in Curriculum:

This 3-credit course fulfills the capstone requirement for the Honors Track in philosophy and for the Honors in Philosophy designation. The course has also been approved for Writing Across the Curriculum credits. The prerequisites for this course are: Major in philosophy with senior standing, PHI 4938 (Senior Seminar) with a minimum grade of B, 3.5 overall GPA, and 3.5 GPA in the philosophy major. The grading system for this course is 'Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory'.

Important Note:

PHI 4972 (Honors Thesis in Philosophy) is not required for the B.A. in philosophy. It is a requirement that must be fulfilled only if a student wishes to receive an Honors in Philosophy certification.

Students who receive a grade of B- or below in PHI 4972 will not receive the Honors in Philosophy designation. However, a grade of C or better for the course will count as a major course for the regular B.A. degree.

Catalog Description:

Variable topic, capstone requirement for the Honors Track in philosophy. Research and completion of a substantial Honors thesis, under the supervision of a faculty adviser. The Honors thesis will focus on a subject area of philosophy (epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, logic, etc.) or a particular philosopher. Upon completion, the Honors thesis must be defended in front of a department faculty committee.

Course Objectives:

An honors designation, in order to be meaningful, should indicate that a student has achieved a high level of academic excellence in the context of a challenging and extraordinary program. Hence, students who seek an honors designation in philosophy should not only achieve success in challenging course work but also demonstrate academic excellence in substantive academic experiences.

Hence, those students seeking honors designation in philosophy must engage in a thesis research project, which will lead to the completion of a senior thesis, focused on a subject area of philosophy (epistemology, ethics, aesthetic, logic, etc.) or a particular philosopher. The objective of the project should be to provide students with opportunity to gain a deeper historical understanding of the relevant philosophical subject.

Note of Honors Distinction:

This course differs substantially from non-Honors courses. First, the writing component of the course is much more demanding, such that it is appropriate for the production of an **Honors Thesis**. Students are exposed to vocabulary of a specifically theoretical nature, and will be expected to comprehend these new concepts and to deploy these new terms in their own critical thinking, analysis, and writing. Students will be expected to familiarize themselves with the history and the ongoing critical and scholarly conversation about these works. Students engage with the theoretical tools used by today's contemporary philosophy scholars.

Course Mechanics and Schedule:

The student will be required to produce an Honors Thesis of significant originality and scholarship that focuses on a subject area of philosophy or a particular philosopher. The Honors Thesis is distinct from the Senior Seminar paper.

Depending on the subject of the thesis, a faculty mentor will be assigned to the student to help him/her in the development and writing of the thesis. Comprehensive feedback will be regularly given by the faculty mentor during the writing of the thesis. The student is expected to meet weekly with the advisor to discuss the thesis development.

When the thesis is completed, a thesis committee of at least two faculty members, including the thesis mentor, will be appointed. The thesis committee will review the thesis prior to the oral defense. The student must defend the thesis in front of the thesis committee, a month prior to the graduation date. If revisions are required, these must be completed and turned in to the thesis committee prior to the graduation date.

Course Evaluation Method and Grading Policy:

The thesis committee will determine whether the quality of the thesis and the student's defense of the thesis warrant the Honors certification. The minimum grade for Honors certification is a B for the thesis work. The grade is based on the following components and is computed on the standard university 100 point grading scale:

- 20% Written form
- 20% Literature Review
- 20% Argumentation
- 20% Coherence
- 20% Originality

Policy on Plagiarism:

“While those who pass on their knowledge to us through their writings deserve our thanks, those who steal the writings of others and present them as their own ideas deserve the greatest reproach [...] and are deserving of strict reprimand and punishment.” (Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, *De architectura libri decem*, Book VII, Introduction, Part 3. London: Benjamin Bloom Pub., 1968)

Plagiarism, i.e., the presenting of the words or ideas of another person as one’s own, is a serious academic offense, which may result in failure in a course or in suspension from the University. The philosophy department and its faculty will, absolutely and without exception, enforce the University policy regarding plagiarism.

Quotation of another person’s words must be indicated in one of the standard ways. This applies to all quoted material, including passages, sentences, and important parts of sentences that are used *verbatim*. Do not paraphrase or virtually quote passages by changing a few words or the word order.

Relating the information in a quote by using different word or expressions, without paraphrasing, also requires citation.

As well, the use of another person’s ideas, even without quoting or paraphrasing, requires citation. The source of all quoted matter and the source of all ideas and information that are taken from the work of another person and that are not a matter of general knowledge must be indicated by the proper use of reference notes. Remember this: When in doubt as to whether or not citation is required, it is better to be safe and use reference notes than not to use them.

If not familiar with the proper use of reference notes, either consult with your professor or consult one of the many reference manuals available in the library (such as the MLA manual of style, the Chicago manual of style, or the APA (American Psychological Association) manual of style). Always inquire whether your professor has a particular stylistic preference regarding citations (that is, either MLA, Chicago style, or APA).

Remember this: Reference notes show that an idea or information came from a published source. Quotation marks show that the specific words of another person are being used. Students are expected to be familiar with section 6C5-4.001 of the Florida Administrative Code (printed on p. 72 of the University Catalog), which describes the penalties incurred by students when they engage in academic irregularities such as plagiarism.

Drop-Dates:

Students are advised to keep the following dates in mind:

August XX: Last day to register/drop/add or withdraw with full refund.

August XX: Last day to register/drop/add or withdraw without receiving a W.

October XX: Last day to drop or withdraw without receiving F.

Officially dropping a course is the student's responsibility. If, for whatever reason, a student stops attending class, completing the assignments, or taking the tests, that student should make sure he/she officially drops this course. Otherwise, he/she will receive an 'F' in the course. No exceptions will be made to this.

Official Holidays and Breaks:

September X: Labor Day.

November XX: Veteran's Day.

November XX-XX: Thanksgiving Recess.

Other Important Dates:

November XX: Last day of classes.

December X-X: Reading Days

December X-XX: Final examination week.

December XX: Grades due in Registrar's office by 9:00 a.m.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) located in Boca Raton - SU 133 (561-297-3880), in Davie (954-236-1222), in Jupiter - SR 117 (561-799-8585), or at the Treasure Coast - CO 128 (772-873-3305), and follow all OSD procedures.

Attendance and University Absence Policy:

Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance.

Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University's absence policy and, in the case of University approved absences, to notify the professor as per University policy below:

Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University-approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities

It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absence and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the

opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence."

<http://www.fau.edu/academic/registrar/FAUcatalog/academics.php><http://www.fau.edu/academic/registrar/FAUcatalog/academics.php>

Florida Atlantic University Code of Academic Integrity (Honor Code):

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see:

http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf