

Phil 3123: Twentieth-Century Philosophy — Fall 2023

<i>Professor:</i>	Daniel Campos
<i>Office:</i>	3311 Boylan
<i>Office Hours:</i>	T 10:00 - 11:00 AM or by appointment
<i>Email:</i>	dcampos@brooklyn.cuny.edu
<i>Course times:</i>	TR 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM
<i>Classroom:</i>	TBA
<i>Modality:</i>	Hybrid Asynchronous
<i>Course site:</i>	Blackboard through CUNY and CUNY Commons

Course Description: What is the relationship between truth, science, and religion? Is truth-seeking research the task of science exclusively or can other areas of human inquiry, such as philosophy and religion, also pursue truth? Are there different senses of “truth”? Is philosophy a search for “truths”? What is the function of ordinary and logical/mathematical languages in finding such “truths”? What is the relationship between these “truths” and politics and democracy?

We will discuss these questions in light of three philosophical traditions from the twentieth-century: analytic, pragmatist, and continental (European). We'll see that these traditions often ask similar questions but deploy different methods of inquiry. We'll read philosophers such as A.J. Ayer, Charles Peirce, William James, Bertrand Russell, Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt, and John Dewey. Their ideas will help us to develop our own philosophical understanding of these questions.

Learning Outcomes

Throughout the course students will develop the following skills:

1. Analytic:
 - a) Ability to identify arguments and distinguish premises and conclusions
 - b) Ability to formulate an argument in support or in opposition to a claim
 - c) Ability to evaluate (by providing reasons) the validity and/or cogency of an argument
 - d) Ability to apply an argument to a practical case

2. Interpretive:
 - a) Ability to explain a selection from a philosophical text
 - b) Ability to analyze and evaluate a selection from a philosophical text
 - c) Ability to provide a reasoned response to a selection from a philosophical text, a philosophical theory, issue, or argument

Texts and Materials

This will be an Open Education Resource / Zero Textbook Cost course, so all texts and audiovisual materials will be provided. Students will need to use their Brooklyn College Library credentials to get access to most materials through [ProQuest Ebook Central](#). If you do not know how to access the Brooklyn College Library online, you must seek advice from the instructor and/or librarians on the first week of class.

Course requirements and grades

The main requirement is the commitment to read, discuss, and write every week. The instructor will provide guiding philosophical questions for reflection and learning. Students must be committed to think about them, read philosophers' investigation of these questions, and write and discuss their own, reasoned views.

Self-introduction — 2%

Discussion board (9 entries, each worth 5%) — 45%

Short essays (3 due; 16% each) — 48%

Professional demeanor — 5%.

Discussion board posts and essays will respond to a question prompt provided by the instructor. They must be completed or submitted in Blackboard within the time frame allowed. There will be eleven discussion forums, but only nine will be required, so students can miss two for no penalty or write the additional ones for extra credit. Discussion board posts will be short assignments, between 200 and 300 words. They will require you to read, think, and write carefully and originally, so ChatGPT, Sparks Notes, Wikipedia, and such sources will be of absolutely no help to you.

Short essays will be somewhat more involved assignments. They will typically be between 2 and 3 pages (12-point font, double-spaced, regular margins). But they will require careful thinking about the topics we will be discussing.

The most important habit you need to succeed in this course is to read, think, and write regularly, with discipline. Notice there are no very large assignments or exams. Rather, this course requires that you work regularly. The point is for you to learn to construct your own knowledge on a continuous, steady pace.

Instructions and rubrics for all assignments will be provided in Blackboard. For convenience, the grading rubric for essays, and the grading scale, is provided at the end of this document.

Communication

You can find more information about me, including the ways to contact me, by clicking on the **Contacts** tab on the left side menu. The best way to reach me is by email to dcampos@brooklyn.cuny.edu. Please include your name and course in the subject line. I respond within 36 hours on weekdays.

Technology Needs

You will need a computer or laptop with high-speed internet access and speakers. In addition- the computer needs to be able to play videos as I have assigned some video clips to watch. You will need a web browser (Mozilla, Chrome, etc.), Microsoft Word or a similar text editor, and a PDF reader such as Adobe Acrobat. If you do not have access to these – please contact me, and we can make alternate arrangements.

Procedures

The Blackboard course site will be main hub for our course. On the course menu you will find:

- **Announcements**
- **Contacts**
- **Syllabus**
- **Course Schedule with Reading Links**
- **Assignments** where you will upload your essays. Files must be labeled with your first and last name and essay number; for example, DanielCampos1. No essays will be accepted by email or any other means.
- **Discussions** where you will submit your forum posts and reply to your classmates,
- **Blackboard Help** to find Q&A and assistance on technical matters related to the use of Blackboard.

This is a hybrid asynchronous course. For the most part, we will meet on Tuesdays and you will work independently on Thursdays. All class sessions will be in-person and will take place on campus. Please consult the Course Schedule for specific, date to date, guidance.

Office hours will not substitute class meetings. They are meant for you to ask specific questions about class content, assignments, and so on.

Given the evolving context of the health emergency caused by the pandemic, we will observe all health mandates and/or recommendations by the State of New York, The City University of New York, and Brooklyn College.

Advice

The most important habit to succeed in his course will be to read and write every week. It will help you if you can establish a work routine.

Class Etiquette

Brooklyn College students are professionals in training. Accordingly, they should approach class sessions as professional meetings. Fully professional demeanor will be expected in the classroom. This demeanor includes coming prepared to class sessions, arriving early, staying until the end, turning off and putting away all electronic gadgets, contributing to the intellectual objectives of the session, and so on. If there are reasons why you cannot attend any class, communicate them to the instructor. Make sure that you turn in all work on time. Evaluation of professional demeanor will be part of the grade.

It is up to each of us to foster a positive learning environment for everyone. Treat others how you want to be treated. Be kind, be patient, have compassion. We are all adults who want to do our best. How a person behaves in the classroom reflects one's willingness to learn, seriousness and motivation both as a student and as an individual

Make-up policy

All writing assignments must be completed on the scheduled date. No make-ups will be permitted. An exception will be made only in the case of a medical or personal emergency. In order to be granted an extension due to a valid excuse, the student must request it in advance and turn in a draft of the project on the due date.

Academic Integrity

“Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in the City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion, as provided herein.” -- CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity, adopted by the Board of Trustees 6/28/2004. Please go to <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies/> for further information about: CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity; BC Procedures for Implementing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity; Flow Chart of the BC Procedures for Implementing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity.

Special Circumstances

If you have any special circumstance such as a learning disability, religious, or military obligation that could affect your participation in this course at any time throughout this semester, it is your responsibility to bring it to your instructor’s attention and review the appropriate documentation and procedures for each circumstance.

Additional Assistance

You can find instructions to seek assistance at the following links:

1. [Learning Center](#)
2. [Center for Student Disability Services](#)
3. [Health and Wellness](#)

The Center for Student Disability Services (CSDS) will be working remotely for the fall semester. In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with CSDS. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to schedule an interview by calling (718) 951-5538 or emailing testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu. If you have already registered with CSDS, email Josephine.Patterson@brooklyn.cuny.edu or testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu to ensure the accommodation email is sent to your professor.

Code of Conduct

Read [Brooklyn College Policies](#)

Grading Rubric for Essays

Students will receive writing prompts and instructions for each of the assigned essays at least two weeks in advance of the due date.

All essays respond to direct question(s) given in the instructions. In order to be accepted by the

instructor, the essay must be considered a suitable response to the prompt. If the instructor has questions about the content or suitability of the essay, he may interview the student about its theses, arguments, and evidence, before deciding whether to grade it.

If accepted as a suitable essay, the main criteria for assessing it will be:

- (1) The essay states a clear thesis that addresses the question or issue directly.
- (2) The essay presents a well-structured argument supporting the main thesis in such a way that:

The premises to support the conclusion [thesis] are clearly stated.

Good reasons are provided to support the premises.

The premises do serve to support the thesis (conclusion) according to a well-organized logical pattern (e.g. deduction, induction, analogy).

- (3) The essay demonstrates a thoughtful command of the relevant readings from the course, and relevant interpretations of these readings serve to support the argument(s).

- (4) The essay demonstrates good writing style and correct grammar and spelling.

Grading Scale

A	>94	[Outstanding]
A-	90 – 94	[Excellent]
B+	88 - 90	
B	83 – 88	[Very good]
B-	80 – 83	
C+	78 – 80	[Good]
C	73 – 88	
C-	70 – 73	[Satisfactory]
D+	68 - 70	
D	63 – 68	
D-	60 – 63	[Dissatisfactory]
F	< 60	[Fails to meet minimum standards]