

About the Instructor

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Course Location: TBD
Course Day/Time: TBD

About the Course

Course description:

One of the most recognized philosophers in history, Socrates, left his legacy by striking up conversations with people in his society. Today, the discipline of philosophy is not that simple and it looks starkly different than it did in the time of Socrates. This course aims to consider and to be *active* in the intersections between the current discipline of philosophy and the public world at large. This course addresses questions such as: Where does philosophy belong? What is the value of philosophy? To what extent should philosophy be interdisciplinary? Are professional philosophers obligated to do work that extends beyond the university? How do we translate philosophical ideas in ways that are modern and accessible? How do we bring philosophy from the university to the public in a way where we can measure actual impact?

This course will explore the historical shift from the ancient Socratic tradition to the current state of affairs in the academic philosophy profession. This course will delve into the wide range of public philosophy conceptions consisting of: public-directed philosophy, applied philosophy, field philosophy, engaged philosophy, and more. Another important theme studied in this course will be the role that philosophy can serve in public policy, political debates, social activism, etc. where careful and informed reasoning is profoundly needed. Also, this course will engage in philosophical interaction with the “real” world through implementation of a service or civic learning project.

This course will be conducted in the traditional philosophical ways by discussing, debating, and thinking; but, it will also bring contemporary and fresh elements to the study of philosophy with an emphasis on current events and technology. This course will provide ample opportunities for selecting topics of student’s own individual interests. Students will be exposed to the classic philosophical process with an eye towards applying it in the public world at large; furthermore, students will gain the ability to continue analyzing other issues philosophically in their future beyond this course and this institution.

Prerequisite knowledge and credit hours: None

Course goals and objectives:

- Recognize the historical context of public philosophy
- Differentiate public-directed philosophy, applied philosophy, field philosophy, and engaged philosophy
- Identify the roles that philosophy can serve in the public sphere
- Evaluate the most effective roles that philosophy can serve in the public sphere
- Summarize and analyze central texts on the nature of public philosophy
- Compare and contrast philosophical material for academic audiences versus public audiences
- Reconstruct and critique the arguments in public philosophy material
- Discuss philosophical topics with a variety of audiences
- Compose original philosophical material for a public audience
- Develop an engaged philosophy project plan
- Implement an engaged philosophy project

Course textbooks:

- *Socrates Tenured* by Frodeman & Briggie
- *The Stone Reader: Modern Philosophy in 133 Arguments* edited by Catapano & Critchley

Sample selection of other course materials:

- Socratic dialogues (such as “Euthyphro,” “Apology,” etc.) by Plato
- “The Crisis of Philosophy” by Stanley
- “A Crisis in the Humanities” by Schmidt
- “What is Public Philosophy for?” by Weinstein
- “Philosophy and Other Disciplines” by Hansson
- “Applied Philosophy” by Stevenson
- “Applied Philosophy and the Role of the Philosopher” by Katzner
- “On Applying Applied Philosophy” by Downing
- “Applied Ethics” by Lippert & Archard
- “How has Philosophical Applied Ethics Progressed in the Past Fifty Years?” by Steinbock
- “Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities” by Nussbaum
- “Public Philosophy: Revitalizing Philosophy as a Civic Discipline” by Meagher
- “Philosophy and Democracy” by Walzer
- “Philosophy via Facebook? Why Not” by Schwitzgebel
- “Writing Philosophy for the Public is a Moral Obligation” by Littmann
- Public philosophy articles from “The Stone” column in The New York Times
- Public philosophy articles from Open Court’s “Popular Culture and Philosophy” series or Wiley’s “Blackwell Philosophy and Pop Culture Series”
- Public philosophy magazines, blogs, videos, podcasts (Philosophy Bites, Philosophy Now, The Philosophers’ Magazine, Wi-Phi, Hi-Phi Nation, Why Radio, Examining Ethics, Why We Argue, etc.)

Course Requirements

Course activities/assessments:

- Quizzes (reading comprehension skills)
 - Quizzes will consist of questions related to the weekly readings and will be taken in BlackBoard.
- Mini-presentations (oral skills)
 - Informal mini-presentations will be delivered by each student to the class on pre-approved, self-selected topics for the weekly themes.
- Journals/Blogs (writing skills)
 - Journals/blogs will be assigned throughout the semester on the weekly themes. Depending on the weekly theme, they will vary in length, style, target audience, etc.
- Service or civic engagement project (practical problem solving skills)
 - A philosophically-oriented service or civic engagement project will be developed and implemented by each student (or pair of students). This pre-approved, self-selected project will take place at the end of the semester as a culminating experience. The purpose of the project is to actively participate in the intersection of philosophy and the “real” world. The impact of the project will be summarized in a report to the class during finals week.

Grading:

Grades will be available in the gradebook in BlackBoard throughout the semester. Total points for the course consist of the following:

- Quizzes= 25%
- Mini-presentations= 25%
- Journals/Blogs= 25%
- Service or civic engagement project= 25%

Grading scale:

The grading scale is as follows:

- A= 90-100%
- B= 80-89%
- C= 70-79%
- D= 60-69%
- F= 59% and below

Course and University Policies

Academic integrity/plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, or dismissal from the University, per the [SIUE academic dishonesty policy](#). Students are responsible for complying with University policies about academic honesty as stated in the [University’s Student Academic Conduct Code](#).

Subject to change notice:

All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your instructor, review the course site regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.

Accessibility:

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please go to Disability Support Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. DSS is located in the Student Success Center, Room 1270; you may contact the office to make an appointment by calling 618-650-3726 or sending an email to disabilitysupport@siue.edu. Please visit the DSS website located online at www.siue.edu/dss for more information.

Participation:

It is vitally important that our classroom environment promote the respectful exchange of ideas, including being sensitive to the views and beliefs expressed during discussions. Your success in this course will depend on your communication, consistent engagement and active participation in all course activities. Success in this course requires that you adhere to the deadlines given below as you complete assignments, discussions and other course activities.

Course Schedule:

Week	Content and Tasks
Week 1	What is philosophy?
Week 2	What is philosophy?
Week 3	What is the value of philosophy? Where does philosophy belong?
Week 4	What is the history of the philosophy profession and how does public philosophy fit in?
Week 5	What is public philosophy?
Week 6	What is public-directed philosophy?
Week 7	What is applied philosophy? What is applied ethics?
Week 8	How interdisciplinary is philosophy?
Week 9	What is field philosophy? Where are alternative careers for philosophers?
Week 10	What is engaged philosophy?
Week 11	Where is philosophy in public policy?
Week 12	Do we have an obligation to do philosophy outside the university?
Week 13	What is the impact of public philosophy?
Week 14	Project implementation
Week 15	Project implementation
Finals Week	Report of project results/impact

Additional Support

Academic Services, Student Services, and Other Support

The [SIUE Student Affairs website](#) is an excellent starting point to learn more about services and supports available to SIUE students. The resources available at the Student Affairs website are separated into [academics](#), [campus involvement](#), [career exploration](#), and [health and wellness](#).

Technical Support

It is your responsibility to address any computer, internet, email, etc. problems that might occur. Such problems are not an excuse for delays in meeting expectations or for missing course deadlines. Contact ITS at 618-650-5500 with any technical concerns relating to any services provided by the university.