HIGHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Syllabus

PHI101 Introduction to Philosophy
3 Credit Hours (Lecture)
Prerequisites: None
C&I Revision Date: 11/17/2025

Department:

Philosophy

Course Description:

This course provides a study of major philosophical ideas of the Western world from the time of Plato to the present. The course will present a broad overview of the history of philosophy and the thoughts of major philosophers. Emphasis will be placed on showing relationships between current societies and significant philosophical ideas.

Course Competencies:

The learning outcomes and competencies detailed in this syllabus meet or exceed the learning outcomes and competencies specified by the Kansas Core Outcomes Groups for this course as approved by the Kansas Board of Regents. **(Kansas Regents Shared Number Course and Title: KSRN Course PHL1010 Introduction to Philosophy.)**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the significance of philosophy in broader cultural and historical contexts
    a. Students will show familiarity with the development of various philosophical traditions during some of their major periods
    b. Students will recognize key characteristics of philosophical inquiry such as its emphasis on careful reasoning and analysis and how it differs from other kinds of inquiry
2. Demonstrate familiarity with and understanding of basic philosophical theories, terminology, and concepts
    a. Students will show familiarity with at least one of the major divisions of Philosophy as determined by the individual instructor. Examples might include Epistemology, Metaphysics, and Ethics
    b. Students will be able to explain key philosophical terms within historical periods (examples might include the Ancient Greeks, Ancient Chinese, Romans, or Modern Philosophy), schools of thought (examples might include rationalism, empiricism, and existentialism), or problems in philosophy (examples might include the existence of God, the free will/determinism question, etc.)
    c. Students will demonstrate understanding of major philosophical theories within historical periods, schools of thought, or problems within philosophy as chosen by the instructor
3. Identify and develop in writing philosophical analyses and arguments based on philosophical reasoning
    a. Students will distinguish between valid and fallacious arguments and recognize examples of each
    b. Students will provide cogent reasons in support of contentious philosophical claims
4. Evaluate, in writing philosophical analyses, arguments, texts, and alternative points of view
    a. Students will show familiarity with some classic philosophical arguments within historical periods (examples might include Plato and Aristotle on the Theory of Forms), within schools of thought (examples might include Descartes and Hume on

innate ideas), or within problems in philosophy (examples might include those for and against the reality of free will, the existence of God, the possibility of certainty, etc.)

b. Students will be familiar with a variety of philosophical positions on contentious issues such as the nature of the mind, the sources of knowledge, and the nature of the good
c. Students will be able to evaluate competing theories and arguments, providing their own positions supported by valid arguments

Course Content:

A. The Nature of Philosophy
B. The Question of Reality
C. The Question of Knowledge
D. The Question of God
E. The Question of Morality
F. The Question of Society

Learning Assessments:

Course competencies may be assessed by class participation, documented written commentaries on the reading assignments, quizzes, and exams.

Instructional Materials:

Textbook: Vaughn, L. (2020). Living Philosophy: A Historical Introduction to Philosophical Ideas. (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0190081522

Guidelines for Requesting Accommodations Based on Documented Disability or Medical Condition

It is the intention of Highland Community College to work toward full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, to make instructional programs accessible to all people, and to provide reasonable accommodations according to the law.

Students should understand that it is their responsibility to self-identify their need(s) for accommodation and that they must provide current, comprehensive diagnosis of a specific disability or medical condition from a qualified professional in order to receive services. Documentation must include specific recommendations for accommodation(s). Documentation should be provided in a timely manner prior to or early in the semester so that the requested accommodation can be considered and, if warranted, arranged.

In order to begin the process all students **must** complete the "Disabilities Self-Identification Form" on our Disability Services website.

This form can also be accessed at the Highland Community College homepage under Students Services/Student Resources/Disability Service or by contacting the Disabilities Coordinator.

A Note on Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct

Highland Community College seeks to assure all community members learn and work in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Title VII, Title IX, and College policy prohibit harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct. Highland Community College encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to report to the Vice President for Student Services, the Human Resources Director or complete an online report about what happened so that they can get the support they need and Highland Community College can respond appropriately.

There are both confidential and non-confidential resources and reporting options available to you. Highland Community College is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource. Responses may vary from support services to formal investigations. As a faculty member, I am required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident. For more information about policies and resources or reporting options, please review our Equity Grievance Policy.