

## Master Syllabus

### 1. Course Information

**College:** College of Liberal Arts  
**Department:** Philosophy  
**Course Title:** Great Books  
**Course Designation and Number:** PHL 204  
**GE Area(s):** IV: Human Expression  
VI: College Component

**Writing Intensive:**  Yes  No

**For WI Courses:**  All sections  Selected Sections are WI.

**Method(s) of Instruction:**  Lecture  
 Discussion  
 Web-enhanced  
 Web-only  
 Other: Small group activities

**Includes Lab:**  Yes  No

**Prerequisites:** None

### 2. Objectives

#### **GE General Program Objectives:**

...to sharpen critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills.

#### **GE Area Four Objectives:**

- a. Recognize and critically discuss significant philosophical works.
- b. Understand the complex blend of personal vision, social-cultural background, ethical values and aesthetic judgement in such works.
- c. Discuss the diverse means of communication in such works.

#### **GE Area Six Objectives:**

- a. Communicate with individuals who are in the student's major, in allied fields, and non-specialists.
- b. Understand important relationships and interdependencies between the student's major and other academic disciplines, world events and life endeavors.
- c. Meet objective (b) of GE Area One: develop logical and fair arguments, and observe appropriate writing conventions.

#### **Course Objectives and GE Learning Outcomes:**

Great Books: Philosophy introduces students to reading, discussing, reflecting upon and writing about great philosophical ideas, arguments and texts. Typically four major philosophical texts are chosen for analysis. Although texts from diverse historical eras and cultural contexts of western civilization are the primary emphasis, non-western texts may also be studied.

**Area four learning outcome(s) addressed:**

Recognizes and critically discusses significant philosophical works

Understand the complex blend of personal vision, social-cultural background, ethical values and aesthetic judgement in such works

Discuss the diverse means of communication in such works

**Area six learning outcome(s) addressed:**

Communicate with individuals who are in the student's major, in allied fields, and non-specialists

Understand important relationships and interdependencies between the student's major and other academic disciplines, world events or life endeavors

**For WI Courses:** WAC Objectives

- Improves writing proficiency through writing assignments
- Uses writing as a tool for learning what one knows and does not know

Typically, instructors in PHL 204 use the following kinds of assignments: essay questions on quizzes and examinations and/or formal critical papers. Some also use one or more of the following kinds of assignments: reading journals; in-class reading responses; electronic class discussion groups (through chat rooms or email); In all sections of PHL 204, all or nearly all the course grade is based on written assignments. Students who cannot complete the writing-intensive portion of the course will not receive a C or better in the course grade.

**3. Suggested Course Materials**

Text(s): Plato's *Phaedo*, Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed*, Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy* and Russell's *The Problems of Philosophy*.

**4. Suggested Methods of Evaluation**

Four tests and one paper. Giving students the option of revising their paper is required.

**5. Grading Policy**

All GE courses are graded A-F.

WI component is graded Pass/Unsatisfactory.

**6. Suggested Weekly Course Outline Including Typical Assignments**

Wk 1: Overview of the nature of philosophy and of philosophy inquiry  
Russell's *The Problems of Philosophy*

Wk 2: Russell's *The Problems of Philosophy*  
Review for Exam #1

Wk 3: Exam #1  
Plato's *Phaedo*

Wk 4: Plato's *Phaedo*

Wk 5: Review for Exam #2  
Exam #2

Wk 6: Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed*  
Paper due

Wk 7: Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed*  
Review for Exam #3

Wk 8: Exam #3  
Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*

Wk 9: Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*

Wk 10: Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*  
Revised paper due  
Review for Exam #4

**7. Other**

Syllabus distributed to students should employ the format approved by UCAP and must include:

- Instructor name, office hours, and contact information
- Office of Disability Services information
- Information on how grades will be determined
- Attendance policy

