[Philosophy - PHI 2010](https://ssb-01.valenciacollege.edu:9050/pls/PROD/bwckctlg.p_disp_listcrse?term_in=201430&subj_in=PHI&crse_in=2010&schd_in=C)

**Instructor:** David Benjamin

**Email:** [dbenjamin11@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:dbenjamin11@valenciacollege.edu) (Please put PHI in subject line)

**Text and Required Supplies:**

Lewis Vaughn’s Philosophy Here and Now, 3rd edition (or most recent). ISBN: 9780190852344

**Course Description:**

Contemporary problems introduce major areas of philosophy: metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, aesthetics, political and social philosophy, and philosophy of religion. Students explore writings of notable philosophers, past and present, and examine how their ideas have shed light on problems and their relevance to modern life.

**Course Objectives:**

This course shall enable a student to become familiar with timeless philosophical issues that confront us as individuals and also as local, national and global societies. In addition to reading some of the fundamental ideas/concepts that helped shape the ideologies of both Western and Eastern cultures, students will respond with their own criticisms and reflections to these readings and, hence, acquire the critical thinking skills necessary for their lives.

**Core Competencies:**

Valencia faculty have defined four interrelated competencies (Think, Value,

Communicate, ACT) that prepare students to succeed in the world community.

These competencies are outlined in the College Catalog. In this course, through

lecture and discussion, group work, and other learning activities, you will further

develop your mastery of those competencies.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Students are required to attend 85% of the classes. You can miss 3 class periods without counting against your grade. More than 3 absences will require a doctor’s note to be excused or else points will be deducted. Attendance is checked at the end of every class. If you are sick due to Covid-19 then you should not come to class regardless of absences. I will not penalize anyone for missing class due to Covid-19. However, you will need to keep up with the schedule and work at home on your own without falling too far behind. If you think you will miss too many classes due to illness, send me an email to discuss your options.

**Grading Policy:**

20% = Participation

60 % = In-class Essays & Exams

20% = Paper

**Grading scale:**

A = 90 – 100, B = 80 – 89, C = 70 – 79, D = 60 – 69, F = < 59

**Participation:**

20% of final grade. I reserve the right to deduct a full letter grade for foul language and disrespectful behavior in online forums and in class. For participation grades, everyone starts out with an A. Whether or not you keep that A until the end of class depends upon your overall performance in the course. The more effort you put into your work, the better your grade will be. Participation grades will be calculated at the end of the semester. Students will only get a 100 for participation if all of their work is completed on time, rather than late, and a grade of 100% is received on ALL assignments. Otherwise, **A = 90, B = 80, C = 70, D = 60, F = 50.**

**Exams:**

60% of final grade. There are 2 in-class closed book/notes exams (15% each) which consist primarily of multiple choice and true/false questions. The final exam is not cumulative, it only covers material since the midterm. Additionally, we will have two in-class essays (15% each) about the films watched in class (The Matrix & Waking Life), which will each count as an exam grade.

**Paper:**

20% of your final grade. There will be one, 2 to 4 page, paper due online by midnight Sunday night before final exam week, as stated in the syllabus schedule and weekly module instructions. The paper will be completed using a word processor, such as Microsoft Word, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and Times New Roman font size 12. Proper MLA style citations are required. Further details will be provided online with the paper assignments in the module instructions.

**IMPORTANT:**

I accept late work but with point deductions for lateness, usually 10% per week late. If you retake a quiz, your grade will be an average of both attempts, not the higher of the two. Final grades will not be rounded up in this course. Whatever grade you end up with at the end of the course is your final grade regardless of how close it may be to the next grade. For example, a final grade of 89.9 is a B not an A. Also, grades are calculated by percentage NOT points. To calculate your final grade you will need to multiply the avg per grade category by the percentage listed above for that category. Since each category is weighted differently, simply adding up all of your points and dividing by the total possible will **not** produce your grade for this course. I deliberately set up the grading criteria to require you to do well on exams in order to get an A in this course. For example, if you have a 90 = A for participation but do not have an A at the end of the course, it likely means your exam grade was the problem not your participation grade, since that was already an A.

**EXAMINATION MAKE-UP POLICY**

Students are encouraged to take exams on time. With the discretion of the instructor, a student will be permitted to make up the midterm but not the final exam. Exams not taken will be given a failing grade.

**Student Conduct and Academic Honesty:**

• Exams and homework are considered individual effort; any submissions that are too similar for coincidence will receive no credit.

• Students are responsible for preparing for class by reading pre-assigned readings and completing assignments.

• The instructor’s email is provided for emergency situations and brief questions about specific assignments. Messages should consist of your name, your class and class time, and a brief message. Emails with specific questions will be answered as soon as possible, usually within 48 hours.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a notification from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with the instructor, preferably during the first two weeks of class. The Office for Students with Disabilities determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities. The East Campus Office is located in Building 5,

Room 216.

**Disclaimer Statement:**

As many factors may affect the development and progress of a class, the instructor reserves the right to alter the schedule as may be required to assure attainment of course objectives. If such a decision is made, the announcement will be made in class or, if lacking for time, via e-mail. CHECK YOUR E-MAIL.

**Withdrawal Date: March 24, 2023**

**Statement of support for students with food/housing/financial needs:**

Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect his or her performance in the course, is urged to meet with a Counselor in the Advising Center for information about resources that may be available from the college or community.

**In Person/Face-to-Face Courses: COVID-19 Policy**

Link to Covid: <https://valenciacollege.edu/about/coronavirus/>

Mask policy and CDC Physical Distancing Guidelines

The health and safety of everyone at the college is our top priority. Therefore, anyone attending the class ***is expected to wear masks indoors and maintain physical distancing***. If you do not have a mask, the college will provide one for you. You may find it helpful to refer to current research on the importance of masking for public safety. Feel free to check out the CDC guidelines on masking, [located at this link](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html).

**COVID-19 Wellness, Reporting, and Support**

If you find yourself feeling unwell and suspect you might be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, test positive for COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who has the COVID-19 virus, please stay home. Please also report this to Valencia’s COVID-19 case manager Tanya Mahan, at [COVIDillness@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:COVIDillness@valenciacollege.edu), so the College can determine how to best support you.

**Tentative Schedule (subject to change at instructor’s discretion)**

Week 1: Jan 9 & 11 Orientation/Introduction

Documentary: Human Family Tree

Week 2: Jan 16 & 18 Martin Luther King Holiday

Ch 1 Classical Philosophy

Week 3: Jan 23 & 25 Ch 1 Classical Philosophy

Week 4: Jan 30 & Feb 1 Ch 6 Epistemology

Week 5: Feb 6 & 8 Ch 6 Epistemology

In-Class Movie: The Matrix

Week 6: Feb 13 & 15 In-Class Movie: The Matrix

In-class Essay: The Matrix

Week 7: Feb 20 & 22 Catch up, Review

In-Class Exam 1

Week 8 Feb 27 & Mar 1 Ch 2 Philosophy of Religion

Week 9 Mar 6 & 8 Ch 4 Metaphysics: The Self, Dualism

Week 10 Mar 13 & 15 Spring Break

Week 11 Mar 20 & 22 Ch 5 Metaphysics: Physicalism, Freedom vs Determinism

Week 12 Mar 27 & 29 Catch up, Review

In-Class Exam 2

Week 13 Apr 3 & 5 Ch 3 Ethics

Week 14 Apr 10 & 12 Ch 8 Political Philosophy

In-Class Movie: Waking Life

Week 15 Apr 17 & 19 In-Class Movie: Waking Life

In-class Essay: Waking Life

Philosopher Paper Due by Midnight Sunday night 4/23

Week 16 Apr 24 & 26 Catch up, Review

In-Class Exam 3 - Final Exam (Non-cumulative)