Bergen Community College
Division of Arts & Humanities
Department of Philosophy & Religion

Course Syllabus

PHR-106 Eastern Philosophy

Basic Information about Course and Instructor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester and year:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course and Section Number:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting Times and Locations:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Instructor:
Office Location:
Phone:
Departmental Secretary: [optional]
Office Hours:
Email Address:

Course Description

PHR-106 Eastern Philosophy is an introduction to the major philosophical traditions of China and India, concentrating on the work of such major thinkers as Lao Tzu, Confucius, Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, Shankara, and Ramanuja. Topics of discussion include the nature, problems, and methods of eastern philosophy; the nature of ultimate reality; the nature of the self; the nature and existence of God; the nature and limits of human knowledge; human nature and the human condition; the meaning and value of life and death; the nature of the good life; and the search for enlightenment.

3 lectures, 3 credits
General Education Course – Humanities Elective – Diversity Course

Student Learning Goals: As a result of meeting the requirements in this course, students will be able to

1. identify the major periods and the major figures in the history of philosophy (east and west);
2. identify and analyze the basic problems of eastern philosophy in the fields of metaphysics, axiology, and epistemology;
3. interpret, summarize, and paraphrase, both orally and in writing, the views of philosophers as expressed in philosophical texts;
4. use the logical and critical thinking methods of philosophy to analyze and evaluate the ways in which Eastern philosophers attempt to solve the problems of philosophy; and
5. state and support their own views on philosophical issues logically, coherently, concisely, and clearly, both orally and in writing.

In pursuit of the foregoing objectives, the course is based on the reading and discussion of philosophical writings of leading Chinese and Indian thinkers (i.e., on primary sources, not text books); the basic principles and methods of logical reasoning are introduced; the techniques of philosophical research and
writing are reviewed; students are given the opportunity and are encouraged to participate actively in
class discussions; and students are required to do a substantial amount of expository and critical writing
in response to the material presented in the course.

The Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) in this course are intended to be aligned with as many of the
college's Core Competencies and General Education Goals as possible. They are also correlated with
the overall Learning Goals of the Philosophy Program. In addition, student progress in reaching the
course's SLOs is to be assessed through a variety of assessment types (tools) and on the basis of a
variety of assessment criteria. These alignments and correlations are depicted in the attached
document. [Back to course listing]

See an individual classroom syllabus for this course based on the policies stated in this departmental
syllabus. [Back to course listing]

Course Content

The course is intended to introduce students to the (at least general) history of philosophy (east and
west), to the basic problems and methods of Chinese and Indian philosophy, and to the leading figures in
the major philosophical traditions of China and India. Therefore, the course includes the following
(mandatory) components:

1. A review of the (at least general) history of philosophy (east and west).
3. The study of the work of at least one major philosopher from each of the following
traditions: Taoism, Confucianism, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

In addition to the foregoing mandatory components, the course may include (in the discretion of the
instructor) the study of eastern philosophical traditions other than the ones specified above and of modern
Chinese and/or Indian philosophers (e.g., Fung Yu-lan, Hsiung Shih-li, Aurobindo Ghose, Sarvepalli
Radhakrishnan).

The course may be presented as an historically-ordered study of the writings of major eastern
philosophers, or as a topically-ordered study of the ways in which eastern philosophers have approached
the major problems of philosophy.

Special Features of the Course (if any) [to be designated by the instructor]

E.g., the use of learning technologies in the course (Internet, PowerPoint, etc.); the inclusion of
technological literacy and/or information literacy learning in the course; etc.

Course Texts and/or Other Study Materials

The required text for this course is *Readings in Philosophy: Eastern & Western Sources*. Ed. George
Recommended Supplementary Sources

Primary Sources


Secondary Sources


Reference Works


Writing and Critical Thinking Requirement(s)

Because PHR-106 is a General Education course, it requires students to complete a variety of critical thinking and writing assignments. These assignments may include class discussions and debates requiring the application of critical thinking skills, short in-class essays, out-of-class writing projects (journals, research papers, argument-analysis papers, book reviews, etc.), tests and examinations containing essay components, and so forth. Instructors will respond to and comment on students' writing in detail.
Grading Policy

A student's final grade for the course is based primarily on his or her performance on the required work for the course (writing assignments, examinations, class presentations, etc.) and on his or her overall mastery of the material covered in the course. A student's class participation may also be evaluated, and the grade thereon may be used as a factor in determining the student's final grade for the course; but a class participation grade will count for no more than fifteen percent (15%) of the final grade.

Attendance Policy

BCC Attendance Policy:

All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.

Philosophy and Religion Departmental Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to attend class regularly and punctually. Attendance will be taken at each class session. It is expected that class will be conducted such that students will benefit in their written work by the lectures and class discussion. If students occasionally arrive late, they should be encouraged to enter quietly, not disturbing the class. If students miss class, they should be encouraged to use the course calendar to stay abreast of material. It is probably a good idea for students to find study partners and to exchange telephone numbers. Make-ups for examinations should be allowed by the instructor if, in the instructor's judgment, the student has presented a good excuse for missing the work. Instructors may penalize work which is late; however, the instructor's policies for make-ups and late work must be clearly specified on the student guide.

Attendance Policy in this Course:

[To be designated by the instructor]

Other College, Divisional, and/or Departmental Policy Statements [optional but recommended]

| Examples: |
| Statement on plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty. |
| ADA statement. |
| Sexual Harassment statement. |
| Statement on acceptable use of BCC technology. |
| Statement on the purpose and value of faculty office hours. |
Student and Faculty Support Services [optional but recommended]

List support services, e.g., the Writing Center, the Math Lab, the Tutorial Center, Online Writing Lab (OWL), Office of Specialized Services, etc. Include information on the BCC Library.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student and Faculty Support Services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Distance Learning Office – for any problems you may have accessing your online courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Tutoring Center</td>
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<td>The Technology Assisted Learning Lab (Math and English)</td>
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<td>The Writing Center</td>
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<td>The Online Writing Lab (OWL)</td>
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<td>The Office of Specialized Services (for Students with Disabilities)</td>
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<td>The Sidney Silverman Library – Reference Desk</td>
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Include the following statement on Logos – The BCC Philosophy Club

Logos – The BCC Philosophy Club

Logos usually meets on Tuesdays during the Activities Period, 12:30-1:25 PM, in Room L-342. I encourage you to join the club. Since you are interested in the study of philosophy, you should find the meetings and other activities of the philosophy club very interesting. For further information, check the Philosophy & Religion bulletin board adjacent to Room L-325A or contact LOGOS Advisor, Dr. Vanda Bozicevic (L-331, 201-493-7528, vbozicevic@bergen.edu). (LOGOS does not hold regular meetings during the summer.)

Include a Course Outline and Calendar [can be combined in a single syllabus section]

The Course Outline and Calendar must include all of the following elements:

- A daily or (at least) weekly schedule of topics to be covered.
- Dates for exams, quizzes, or other means of assessment. (This does not mean that all evaluation of students must be in groups and at the same time. Exams and other means of assessment can be listed as "to be scheduled individually."
- Due dates for major assignments – e.g., when is a paper due; if the topic has to be approved, when; if an outline or draft is an interim step, when it is due.
- Any required special events must be included in the outline/calendar, e.g., a lecture by a visiting speaker, a dramatic or musical performance, a field trip.
- Designation of Student Learning Objectives – by number – for each topic (see sample below).
- A note to students stating that the course outline and calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.
Sample Format for Course Outline and Calendar

**Note to Students:** The following Course Outline and Calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week(s)</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Topic/Activity</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Assignments/Events</th>
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**SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE**

**PART I: THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY – EASTERN AND WESTERN PERSPECTIVES**

**Required Reading 1:**
Cronk, "Notes on the Nature of Philosophy" (handout)

**Supplementary Readings on the Nature of Philosophy:** TBA

**PART II: CONFUCIAN PHILOSOPHY – HOW TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN A CIVILIZATION**

**Required Reading 2:**
Confucius (Kung Fu Tzu) (551-479 BC), the *Analects*, in *Readings*, 1-14

**Supplementary Reading:**

**PART III: TAOIST PHILOSOPHY – FINDING "THE WAY" (TAO)**

**Required Reading 3:**
Lao Tzu (6th century BC), the *Tao Te Ching*, in *Readings*, 15-24

**Supplementary Readings:**
Raymond M. Smullyan, from *The Tao is Silent*, in *Readings*, 503-513

**PART IV: PHILOSOPHY AND LOGIC (preparation for classical Indian philosophy)**

**Required Reading 4:**
Cronk, "Philosophy and Logic" (handout)

**Supplementary Readings on Logic:** TBA
PART V: MAHAYANA BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY – VOIDISM VS. IDEALISM
Required Readings 5, 6, and 7:
Early Buddhist Texts, in Readings, 39-60
Nagarjuna (2nd century AD), The Fundamentals of the Middle Way, in Readings, 211-222
Vasubandhu (4th century AD), Twenty Verses on Consciousness-Only, in Readings, pp. 223-228
Supplementary Reading: TBA

PART VI: VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY – NON-DUALISM VS. QUALIFIED NON-DUALISM
Required Readings 8, 9, and 10:
From the Upanishads, in Readings, 25-37
Shankara (788-820 AD), from his Commentary on the Vedanta Sutras, in Readings, 229-250
Ramanuja (1017-1137 AD), from his Commentary on the Vedanta Sutras, in Readings, 251-261
Supplementary Readings:
Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975), from An Idealist View of Life, in Readings, 447-468
George Cronk, On Shankara.

SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR
[with designation of Student Learning Objectives – by number – for each topic]

Note to Students: The following Course Outline and Calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week(s)</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Topic/Activity/Assignments</th>
<th>Student Learning Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Sep 6, 8, 13, 15</td>
<td>The Nature of Philosophy – Eastern and Western Perspectives Read &quot;Notes on the Nature of Philosophy&quot; (handout)</td>
<td>1, 2, 5</td>
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<td>3-4</td>
<td>Sep 20, 22, 27, 29 Sep 20 Sep 27 Sep 29</td>
<td>Confucian Philosophy – How to Build and Maintain a Civilization Read Confucius Confucius/Lao Tzu Paper assigned (due by 10/17) Short Essay on the Nature of Philosophy due Midnight deadline for completing Student Information &amp; Syllabus Comprehension Surveys</td>
<td>1, 3, 5</td>
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<td>9-11</td>
<td>Nov 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17 Nov 17</td>
<td>Mahayana Buddhist Philosophy – Voidism vs. Idealism Read Early Buddhist Texts, Nagarjuna, &amp; Vasubandhu (in that order) Argument Analysis Paper due</td>
<td>1-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Events</td>
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<td>12-14</td>
<td><strong>Vedanta Philosophy – Non-Dualism vs. Qualified Non-Dualism</strong></td>
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<td>Read <em>Upanishads</em> selections, Shankara, &amp; Ramanuja (in that order)</td>
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<td>Short Essay on Buddhist Philosophy due</td>
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<td>Nov 22</td>
<td><strong>Thanksgiving Weekend</strong></td>
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<td>Nov 25-28</td>
<td><strong>Final deadline for late and extra credit work –</strong></td>
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<td>no late or extra credit work accepted after this date</td>
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<td>Dec 8</td>
<td>Short Essay on Vedanta Philosophy due</td>
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<td>Dec 13</td>
<td><strong>Final Review</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Final Review</strong></td>
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