# Philosophy Senior Assignment

## Syllabus (v1)

## Course Info

**Instructor:** Richard Fry, rfry@siue.edu  
**Meeting Time:** M, 6:00-8:50PM, Peck Hall 0307  
**Office Hours:** M/W 2:00-3:00PM, Peck Hall 3210

## Course Description

The philosophy senior assignment whose goal is to engage students in independent research culminating in a substantial paper and presentation. Students are expected to produce the sort of paper that could be submitted to conferences (such as the Undergraduate Conference held at SIUE), or as a writing sample for Philosophy graduate programs.

## Course Goals

- Develop skills essential to conducting independent philosophical research  
- Learn how to do advanced philosophical writing  
- Become experienced presenters of their own work  
- Respond thoughtfully to constructive criticism from others, including peers  
- Develop the ability to give constructive criticism to peers  
- Engage with the work of their peers  
- Develop essential life skills such as time management, communication when encountering difficulties, and thoughtful engagement with others

## Required Texts

There are no textbooks for this course.  
Readings will be posted to Blackboard throughout the semester.
Policies

Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism

- You are expected and required to uphold SIUE’s standards of academic honesty
- **Plagiarism of ideas or words is unacceptable.**
- Confirmed academic dishonesty will result in automatic failure of the course.
- Familiarize yourself with what counts as plagiarism and SIUE’s policies:
  - [http://www.siue.edu/lovejoylibrary/services/instruction/plagiarism.shtml](http://www.siue.edu/lovejoylibrary/services/instruction/plagiarism.shtml)
  - [http://www.siue.edu/policies/3c2.shtml](http://www.siue.edu/policies/3c2.shtml)

Personal Conduct

- You are responsible for arriving on time, being prepared, and comporting yourself in an appropriate manner. This means treating your classmates with respect and courtesy.
- **You are responsible for helping to foster a safe and productive learning environment.**
  - Some assignments this semester will make us vulnerable to each others’ feedback. This can provoke powerful emotions, so you must be mindful of how your actions may impact your peers.

Preparedness and Attendance

- Preparedness includes reading *and bringing* the assigned material and participating actively—both asking and answering questions—in discussion.
- **You are expected to bring any assigned reading to each class meeting.** Laptops/tablets will only be permitted when absolutely necessary.

Grades

- **Late Work:** Each assignment type has its own late work policy. See the list of assignments on the next page for details.
- **Extensions:** Some types of work are eligible for extensions. If you need more time or to change a due date for one of these, email me with a brief description of your situation.
  - If I approve an extension, we will work out an appropriate timeframe.
  - Extensions must be requested at least 24 hours before the assignment is due.
- **Grade Appeals:** If you believe your work deserves a different grade than it received, you may ask in writing for reconsideration.
  - Submit this request within one week but no sooner than one day after work is returned.
  - Your written request must explain why you believe the work deserves a different grade.
  - Please note that if a change is made, the new grade may be either higher or lower.

Changes

- I reserve the right to change any part of this syllabus at any time.
- Changes will be announced in class and a new version of the syllabus posted to Blackboard.
Assignments and Assessment

More details about these assignments will be distributed online and in class throughout the semester.

**MINOR ASSIGNMENTS (26%)**

- Thirteen minor assignments will be graded on a ✓+ (2pts) / ✓- (1pts) basis
- You will get **four free days** worth of late work for these minor assignments
  - Use them all on a single assignment, or spread them out: the choice is yours!
  - Minor assignments for **writing weeks** (26 Sept, 17 Oct) and **moral support** (28 Nov, 06 Dec) cannot be extended in this way
- After all four days are used, every late minor assignment will receive at best 1pt
- After all four days are used, all minor assignments more than three days late will be given 0/2pts

**ASSIGNMENTS (24%)**

- Three assignments—outline, rough draft, first draft—will be graded out of 8pts/ea.
- Each of these represents a major point in the development of your final product
- Grading for each of these will be primarily for completion
- Each day late will result in a 1/2pt deduction

**PRESENTATION (20%)**

- In the last two weeks of class, you’ll present your paper to Philosophy faculty and participate in a short Q&A about your paper/view
- You’ll be expected to **present** (not read!) your paper
- No late work: you’ll need to reschedule your presentation more than 24 hours before it’s due to take place if something comes up
- We’ll prepare for this presentation in the weeks after Spring Break

**FINAL PAPER (30%)**

- A substantial 2800-3500 word paper presenting a novel philosophical thesis
  - Your paper will be responsive to issues in the scholarly literature on your topic
  - Your paper will advance and defend an original philosophical claim on the basis of your own, original argumentation
- No late work will be accepted to the final paper. None.
  - That is, papers received after May 8th will receive no credit.
### Course Calendar

*Minor assignments are italicized

**Assignments and other major due dates are in bold**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Sunday</th>
<th>Monday in Class</th>
<th>Due Tuesday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>14 Jan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bibliography Entries #1-5</td>
<td>28 Jan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Outline of Published Paper</td>
<td>04 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bibliography Entries #6-10</td>
<td>11 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mentor Meeting Report</td>
<td>18 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>25 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>04 Mar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spring Break!

| 8          | —              | 18 Mar | What do Philosophy Presentations Look Like? | One-on-One mtg |
| 9          | Presentation Reflection | 25 Mar | Struggles and Sticking Points | First Draft |
| 10         | —              | 01 Apr | More Sample Presentations | — |
| 11         | Slides (week 1) | 08 Apr | Practice and Peer Feedback | — |
| 12         | Slides (week 2) | 15 Apr | Practice and Peer Feedback | — |
| 13         | Revised slides (week 1) | 22 Apr | Presentations (and Moral Support) | — |
| 14         | Revised slides (week 2) | 29 Apr | Presentations (and Moral Support) | — |
| —          | —              | 08 May | Final Papers Due | — |
List of Assignments and Due Dates

You are expected to complete assignments before midnight for the day they are listed. More details will be distributed in class and/or by Blackboard throughout the semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 Jan</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>List of three to five possible topics (and related courses)</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Jan</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>First set of five annotated bibliography entries (#1-5)</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Jan</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Email to mentor scheduling a face-to-face meeting</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 Feb</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Outline of professional philosophy paper</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 Feb</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Concise statement of topic and probable thesis</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Feb</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Second set of five annotated bibliography entries (#6-10)</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Feb</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td><strong>Outline of your paper</strong></td>
<td>assn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Feb</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Report on your meeting with your mentor</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Feb</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Sustained writing time in Lovejoy library during class time</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Feb</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td><strong>Rough draft</strong></td>
<td>assn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 Mar</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Sustained writing time in Lovejoy library during class time</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 Mar</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Completed a one-on-one meeting with me after 17 Feb</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Mar</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Report on philosophy presentation</td>
<td>minor</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 Mar</td>
<td>Tues</td>
<td><strong>First draft</strong></td>
<td>assn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/14 Apr</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Draft slides for practice presentation</td>
<td>minor</td>
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<tr>
<td>22/29 Apr</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Revised slides</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/29 Apr</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Apr</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Attend class to lend moral support to your peers</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Apr</td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>Attend class to lend moral support to your peers</td>
<td>minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 May</td>
<td>Weds</td>
<td><strong>Final paper</strong></td>
<td>major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resources

**Philosophical Resources**

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: [http://www.iep.utm.edu](http://www.iep.utm.edu)
Philpapers.org: [http://philpapers.org](http://philpapers.org)
Tips on Writing a Philosophy Paper: [http://goo.gl/iDzgFb](http://goo.gl/iDzgFb)

**Academic Resources**

ACCESS (Accessible Campus Community & Equitable Student Support): Student Success Center, Room 1270, [http://www.siue.edu/dss/](http://www.siue.edu/dss/) and myaccess@siue.edu
Provides accommodations to students in need of them. ACCESS also has services which students can use to increase skills in learning, time management, and test-taking.

**Instructional Services:** [http://www.siue.edu/is/](http://www.siue.edu/is/)
Provides instructional support unit for the students, faculty and staff. Helps the underprepared to prepare, the prepared to advance, and the advanced to excel.

**Writing Center:** in the Academic Advancement Center, [http://www.siue.edu/is/writing/](http://www.siue.edu/is/writing/)
The writing center assists you as you analyze your paper and explore ways to improve it. Our primary concern is to help you become a better writer. To do this, we challenge you to learn more about composition and the conventions of Standard English.

**Health and Wellness Resources**

**Counseling Services:** Student Success Center room 0222, [http://www.siue.edu/counseling/](http://www.siue.edu/counseling/)
Provides individual counseling, counseling groups, healthy living workshops, consultations, and referrals. Special attention is paid to the ongoing issues affecting college students.

**Student Health Clinic Services:** Student Success Center room 0222, [http://www.siue.edu/healthservice/clinic/index.shtml](http://www.siue.edu/healthservice/clinic/index.shtml)