

Syllabus for Justin Kalef's PHIL 101-01, Fall 2021 Course (Online, Synchronous)

Note: This is an unusual course, and many things on this syllabus may be unfamiliar or mysterious to you. I discuss and clarify the entire syllabus in a series of video lectures [here](#). I recommend watching those videos right away rather than reading this syllabus further on your own.

Meeting times and links: This course will meet online in *two* locations:

Mondays: 5:00 to 6:20pm on our Slack channel, [here \(before attending for the first time, you'll have to accept the Slack invitation sent to your email address\)](#)

Wednesdays: 5:00 to 6:20pm on Zoom, [here](#).

Contact information and office hours: I can be reached by email at jkalef@philosophy.rutgers.edu. I will hold office hours online on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3pm to 4pm at [my Zoom link](#).

Text: *Why It's OK to Speak Your Mind* by Hrishikesh Joshi (Routledge, 2021)

Purpose: To introduce students to the art of critical thinking and to the purposes and methods of philosophy.

Method: This course will use *active learning* strategies and a *flipped classroom* format. Students will learn philosophy by engaging in their own original philosophical work, including the discovery and refining of dialectical principles. This will be done in an interactive and collaborative setting. Rather than hold lectures during class time and ask students to coordinate their own times for collaborative work, I will make all the lectures available for students to watch whenever they wish, and will reserve our scheduled class time for active, collaborative work.

Assessment: You will be assessed on the basis of the following work:

1. Qualifying Work (10 points) Due date: Wednesday, September 15th

This will almost certainly be the easiest work of the course. You simply have to show that you have attentively read the Week 1 documents and watched the Week 1 video lectures, and have logged in to our Slack site. Everything you need to know about the Qualifying Work can be found [here](#).

Anyone not completing the Qualifying Work may not earn credit on any other work, and will fail the course! Please be sure that you get this done on time. If you are late, things become perilous, as you will discover [here](#).

2. Argument mapping training (15 points) Due Date: Friday, October 1st

You can get started on this work right away by going [here](#). A description of the grading can be found [here](#).

3. Forum contributions (3 x 5 points = 15 points)

Instructions for forum contributions can be found [here](#). Your contributions to the forum will be assessed at the end of three periods, each time earning you a score of 5 points. The closing dates for the three contributions, in order, are: October 20th, November 17th, and December 13th.

The forum is on our Canvas site, [here](#).

4. Quizzes (10 x 2 points = 20 points)

Instructions for quizzes can be found [here](#). There are fifteen, but you are evaluated only on the best ten you do. **There are no makeup quizzes beyond the extra quizzes already available, regardless of excuses.**

The link to the quizzes is on our Canvas site, [here](#).

5. In-class teamwork (10 points x 2 = 20 points)

Details about the in-class teamwork can be found [here](#). You will be assessed on this twice: once for your contributions to the teamwork in the first half of the course (Weeks 3-9), and once for your contributions to the teamwork in the second half (Weeks 10-16). **Not everyone on a team will earn the same score**, and free riding will not be a good strategy in this course.

The in-class teamwork will always take place during our Monday meetings, which take place on our Slack between 5pm and 6:20pm, Eastern Time. [Here](#) is another link to the Slack site.

6. Proposing and defending a dialectical principle (5 points x 2 = 10 points)

Details about this team activity can be found [here](#). You will have three chances to do this work. I will drop your worst score out of the three. **Again, not everyone on a team will earn the same score.**

7. Textual clarification (10 points)

Details about this activity can be found [here](#). You will do this work individually. A successful solo attempt will earn you up to 10 points. A collaborative effort in which two or more students' work gradually gets across the finish line will earn a relative portion of that total. A sincere clarifying question that a grader indicates as worthy of answers for credit may receive up to 3 points.

The maximum score one can earn in this category is 10 points.

Makeup: Final exam (optional)

There is no need to take the final exam. It is merely a makeup exam. If you choose to take it, you must reserve a spot at the exam *in advance*, and indicate at that time which assignment category or categories you would like your final exam score to replace. You may choose any assignment categories, and any number of categories, other than the Qualifying Work. More details can be found [here](#).

No other makeup work options or grade adjustments will be offered to any students in this course. Those who choose to take the final exam but miss the exam date will need a note from the Dean before they may take it again.

All this gives you a score out of 100. That score will be converted to a letter grade as follows:

90.000 or above = A

85.000 to 89.999 = B+

75.000 to 84.999 = B

70.000 to 74.999 = C+

60.000 to 69.999 = C

50.000 to 59.999 = D

49.999 or below = F

Dates (please make sure that you have read the indicated chapters of *Why It's OK to Speak Your Mind* by the following dates):

Week 1

Wednesday, September 1st

Reading: None

Week 2

Wednesday, September 8th

Reading: Prologue

(Quiz 1 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 3

Monday, September 13th

Reading: Chapter 1, 'The Division of Cognitive Labor' (pages 1-5)

Wednesday, September 15th

Reading: Chapter 1, 'Blind Spots and Social Pressure' and 'A Detailed Example: Three Engineers and a Dam' (pages 5-10)

(Quiz 2 due before 1pm – link here)

- Due date for Qualifying Work

Week 4

Monday, September 20th

Reading: Chapter 1, 'Lessons from the 20th Century' and 'The Importance of Reference Networks' (pages 10-15)

Wednesday, September 22nd

Reading: Chapter 1, 'The Danger Today' and 'Upshots for Conformity and Cooperation' (pages 15-20)

(Quiz 3 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 5

Monday, September 27th

Reading: Chapter 1, first half of 'Institutions of Knowledge Production' (pages 20-25)

Wednesday, September 29th

Reading: Chapter 1, second half of 'Institutions of Knowledge Production' and 'Conclusion' (pages 26-29)

(Quiz 4 due before 1pm – link here)

- October 1st is the **due date** for your argument mapping work

Week 6

Monday, October 4th

Reading: Chapter 2, 'Conformism as Free Riding' and 'Dam and Engineers Redux' (pages 31-37)

Wednesday, October 6th

Reading: Chapter 2, 'A Duty to Speak Your Mind' and 'Imperfect Duties and Keeping Your Powder Dry' (pages 37-43)

(Quiz 5 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 7

Monday, October 11th

Reading: Chapter 2, 'Sharing Evidence vs. Contrarianism and Trolling', 'Good Faith', and 'The Imperfect Duty, Generalized' (pages 43-51)

Wednesday, October 13th

Reading: Chapter 2, 'Expressing Opinions and Courage' and 'Marginal Value and Heterodox Research' (pages 51-66)

(Quiz 6 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 8

Monday, October 18th

Reading: Chapter 2, 'Expressing Opinions and Courage' and 'Marginal Value and Heterodox Research' (pages 51-56)

Wednesday, October 20th

Reading: Chapter 3, 'The Inefficacy Objection' (pages 67-71)

(Quiz 7 due before 1pm – link here)

End of the first forum contribution period

Week 9

Monday, October 25th

Reading: Chapter 3, 'The Emperor Has No Clothes', 'Partisan Disputes', and 'Noble Lies' (pages 71-80)

Wednesday, October 27th

Reading: Chapter 3, 'Aggressive Conformism and Grandstanding' (pages 80-85)

(Quiz 8 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 10

Monday, November 1st

Reading: Chapter 4, 'Speaking Your Mind – For Yourself or Others?' and 'Reason and Human Flourishing' (pages 87-96)

Wednesday, November 3rd

Reading: Chapter 4, 'Reasoning and Speaking Your Mind' and 'Weighing Costs' (pages 96-105)

(Quiz 9 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 11

Monday, November 8th

Reading: Chapter 4, 'Reason Is Essentially Social', 'Upshots for Individuals and Institutions', and 'Conclusion' (pages 105-113)

Wednesday, November 10th

Reading: Chapter 5, opening pages (pages 115-120)

(Quiz 10 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 12

Monday, November 15th

Reading: Chapter 5, 'Independence as Constitutive of a Great Life' (pages 120-126)

Wednesday, November 17th

Reading: Chapter 5, 'Independence as the Privilege of the Few', 'Education as Solution?' and 'Politics and Conformity' (pages 126-133)

(Quiz 11 due before 1pm – link here)

End of the second forum contribution period

Week 13

Monday, November 22nd

Reading: Chapter 4, 'The Flourishing of Great Individuals and "Christian" Morality', 'Honesty', and 'Conviction' (pages 133-137)

(Quiz 12 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 14

Monday, November 29th

Reading: Chapter 4, 'The Homogenization of Culture' (pages 137-140)

Wednesday, December 1st

Reading: Epilogue, opening pages and 'Simple Continuation vs. Flourishing' (pages 141-145)

(Quiz 13 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 15

Monday, December 6th

Reading: Remainder of Epilogue (pages 145-151)

Wednesday, December 8th

Reading: None

(Quiz 14 due before 1pm – link here)

Week 16

Monday, December 13th

Reading: None

End of the third forum contribution period

(Quiz 15 due before 1pm – link here)

Final Exam (Optional): Wednesday, December 22nd, 8pm to 11pm on the Slack