

UWG PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM

Class Information	Contact Information for Dr. Lane
PHIL 3120 sec. 01-W American Philosophy Instructor: Dr. Robert Lane Spring Semester 2019 11am–12:15pm, Humanities 134 Prerequisites: PHIL 2010 or permission of instructor All online content available through CourseDen/D2L Email: rlane@westga.edu *	Office: TLC 2247 <i>Office Hours:</i> Tuesday: 8:40–9:20am; 12:30–1:45pm Wednesday: 9:30am–2pm Thursday: 8:40–9:20am; 12:30–1:45pm <i>and also by appointment</i> Dr. Lane's office phone: (678) 839-4745 English/Philosophy Dept. phone: (678) 839-4848 Dr. Lane's email: rlane@westga.edu *

**All email communication must be conducted from your official UWG email account. Students are obligated to check their UWG email accounts on a regular basis and to ensure that their mailboxes do not become full. I am not allowed to disclose your grades over email.*

This is a **Discipline Specific Writing (DSW)** course, fulfilling one of two DSW requirements for the College of Arts and Humanities. All DSW courses require that students write a minimum of 4,000 words across multiple assignments, not including revisions. There will be multiple written assignments that will be evaluated for subject matter, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and organization, among other things.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: What is truth? What is the best way for me to form beliefs about the world? What is philosophy, and what is its relationship with science? This course tackles those questions and others by examining how they were treated by the thinkers who founded pragmatism, America's distinctive philosophical tradition. In particular, we will study the works of four classical American pragmatists: Charles Peirce, William James, John Dewey, and Alain Locke. We will also study the ideas of more recent pragmatists Richard Rorty and Susan Haack.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: By the end of the semester, each student will be able to:

- explain in writing, from memory, some of the philosophical doctrines and arguments of Peirce, James, Dewey, Locke, Rorty and Haack [assessment method: one in-class written examination];
- summarize and articulate questions raised by some of the doctrines and arguments of Peirce, James, Dewey, Locke and Rorty [assessment method: four short papers written outside of class];
- describe in detail and critically respond to some of the doctrines and arguments of one or more of the figures mentioned above [assessment method: one term paper written outside of class].

These course-specific learning outcomes contribute to the departmental learning outcomes of the Philosophy Program by enabling students better to

- discuss the views of at least three major historical figures of philosophy;
- critically analyze and explain a philosophical issue in written communications.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: The typical class session will consist of about 80% lecture and 20% class discussion. Lectures are intended to elucidate and provide supplementary information relevant to the reading assignments and to form the basis for a vigorous class discussion of the arguments and theories at hand. Reading assignments will be made on a regular basis. In order to benefit fully from lectures and to participate meaningfully in class discussion, **it is a must** that you do the reading when it is assigned.

READING: There is no required textbook for this course. All assigned readings will be made available online at no charge, either posted in or linked to from CourseDen.

TIME REQUIREMENTS: UWG grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of (approximately) one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately sixteen weeks. For this three credit-hour course, students are required to spend **two and a half hours (150 minutes) in class each week and to conduct at least an additional 6 hours of work relevant to this course outside of class each week.** You should expect to work more hours than this outside of class during periods when you are preparing for an exam or a working on a major writing assignment.

For the Americans with Disabilities Act, UWG Email, Credit Hour, and UWG Honor Code policies as well as information on Academic Tutoring, Student Services, and Technical Requirements, Privacy Policy, and Accessibility Statements, please see <http://www.westga.edu/UWGSyllabusPolicies/>

METHODS OF ASSESSING LEARNING IN THIS CLASS

- **Short papers (64 pts = 4 papers worth 16 points each).** Length: 1,000-1,200 words per paper. Papers must be uploaded into CourseDen. A grading rubric and instructions for each paper will be posted in CourseDen. Each student must write **four** of the six short papers indicated on the course schedule.
 - **All students must write Short Paper 1, on Peirce's "The Fixation of Belief," due Thursday 1/24.**
 - Each student will then choose three of the remaining five short paper assignments to complete.
- **Term paper (60 pts).** Length: 2,000-2,500 words. You must submit a draft by no later than **Tuesday 4/4**. You may submit the draft at any earlier date. Your draft must be at least 1,500 words long. Both the draft and the final version must be submitted through CourseDen. A grading rubric and instructions will be posted in CourseDen.
- **Comprehensive final examination (60 points).** Definitions and short-essay format. This will cover all of the material we will consider throughout the entire semester. A study guide will be provided at least 10 days before the exam.
- **Class participation** does not contribute to your final grade in any fixed way, but I will consider giving borderline students the next highest grade if their in-class questions and contributions to class discussions warrant it.
- Extra-credit work will not be given under any circumstances.
- Work completed for other courses will not be accepted in this course.

GRADING SCALE:

A	184 – 166 pts
B	165 – 147 pts
C	146 – 102 pts
D	101 – 110 pts
F	109 – 0 pts

CONVERSION TO HONORS CREDIT

- Any student wishing to receive honors credit for this course must get the approval of the professor and complete all the necessary paperwork during **the first week of class**. No honors forms will be signed after this point.

TITLE IX

- UWG is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual misconduct—including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking—is also prohibited at UWG. Our school encourages anyone experiencing sexual misconduct to talk to someone about what happened, so they can get the support they need and our school can respond appropriately. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, want more information about filing a report, or have questions about school policies and procedures, please contact our Title IX Coordinator, Claudia Lyerly (678-839-2981; clyerly@westga.edu). UWG is legally obligated to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore it cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, but it will consider a request for confidentiality and respect it to the extent possible. As a teacher, I am also required by our school to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident.

LATE ARRIVAL, EARLY DEPARTURE

- An early departure or late arrival may be counted as an absence, depending on the circumstances. I will decide in each case whether an early departure or a late arrival counts as an absence. If you know before class that you will not be able to stay for the entire class session, please inform me of this before class and sit as close to the door as possible, so as to cause as small a distraction as possible when you leave.

ATTENDANCE

- **You may miss five class meetings with no effect on your grade. Beginning with your sixth absence, you will lose seven points (out of 184; about 4% of your total course grade) from your final average for every class meeting you miss.** This policy takes effect on the day of our second class meeting (Thursday January 10). I will make exceptions for absences necessitated by UWG-sponsored events or by other circumstances that were absolutely outside your control. However, I will make these exceptions **only if ALL of your absences can be accounted for in one of these ways** (e.g., if you miss six classes and you have documented, acceptable reasons for missing only five classes, then your sixth absence will still count against you). Documentation will be required in all cases in which I make an exception to this attendance policy.
- **Students who miss 10 or more class meetings will not earn a passing grade in this course.** In this case the reason for your absences is irrelevant. If you are unable to attend class for a prolonged period of time due to medical reasons, a family emergency, or any other reason, you should withdraw from the course; if the withdrawal date has passed, you should apply for a hardship withdrawal.

From the *UWG Undergraduate Catalog*:

- “Instruction begins the first day of class. In face-to-face courses, if students fail to attend the first day and have not contacted the instructor to explain their absence, they may be dropped during the Drop/Add Period to make room for other students.”
- “Class attendance policies are determined by each instructor for his or her courses and may be found in the syllabus. Since course policies differ, students are responsible for understanding attendance requirements for each course. Failure to comply with those requirements may significantly affect grades.”
- “**Students are expected to attend each class meeting.** Students absent from class while officially representing the University or observing religious holidays should generally not be penalized in the calculation of final grades, as long as they provide advance notice and expeditiously make arrangements to complete any missed work.
- “University-sponsored activities include but are not limited to the following: intercollegiate athletic competitions; musical/theatrical/art performances or exhibitions associated with a degree program; debate competitions; and research conferences. Activities not considered to be university-sponsored include participation in clubs, even if they are affiliated with UWG, or events associated with social organizations such as fraternities or sororities.
- “Regardless of the reason for the absence, each student is responsible for the material covered in class, for completing any assignments, and for making specific arrangements with the instructor for any work missed. The degree to which missed work can be made up will depend upon the nature of the work and its intended purpose. Make-up is at the discretion of the instructor.
- “Any student who must be absent for more than one week of class should notify the Patient Advocates in Health Services, telephone 678-839-6452. The student should also notify the instructor or department.”

EXPECTATIONS FOR CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

- **Electronic devices (smart phones, laptops and tablets) may be used in class only for course-related purposes, e.g., viewing electronic versions of readings. I reserve the right to ban all such devices from class if students violate this policy by texting, viewing material unrelated to the course, etc.**
- **I urge you to take notes by hand rather than with an electronic device.** Typing notes with a laptop encourages you to simply transcribe what’s being said without thinking about it, while taking notes by hand requires that you think about what you’re writing.
- **Do not leave the room during class unless it is absolutely necessary that you do so.** Leaving the classroom while class is in session is both disrespectful and distracting. So when you come to class, be prepared to remain in the classroom for the full duration of the class period.
- **Do not study material from other classes while this class is in session.** While you are in this class, I expect your attention to be focused on it rather than on your other courses.
- **Students may be dismissed from any class meeting at which they exhibit behavior that disrupts the learning environment of others.** Such behavior includes—but is not limited to—arriving late for class, allowing cell phones to ring, and speaking disrespectfully to the instructor and/or to other students. Each dismissal of this kind will count as an absence and will be applied toward the attendance policy stated above.

COURSE SCHEDULE. The following schedule is **TENTATIVE** and might change as the semester progresses. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to keep up with due dates and reading assignments by checking CourseDen or contacting me.

Jan.	Topic	reading due	tests / papers due
T 8	Introduction to Pragmatism	--	
R 10	Peirce: Belief, Doubt and Inquiry	"The Fixation of Belief" secs.I-IV	
T 15	Peirce: Methods of Fixing Belief	"The Fixation of Belief" sec.V (up to the middle of CP5.384)	
R 17	Peirce: The Method of Science & Realism	"The Fixation of Belief" sec.V (from CP5.384 to the end)	
T 22	Peirce: The Pragmatic Maxim	"How to Make Our Ideas Clear" secs.I-III	
R 24	Peirce: The Pragmatic Clarification of Reality	"How to Make Our Ideas Clear" sec.IV (CP5.405 through CP5.407)	Paper 1: Peirce
T 29	Peirce: The Pragmatic Clarification of Reality	"How to Make Our Ideas Clear" sec.IV (from CP5.408 to the end)	
R 31	James: Two Philosophical Temperaments	<i>Pragmatism</i> Lecture I: "The Present Dilemma in Philosophy" pp.3-13	
Feb.	Topic	reading due	tests / papers due
T 5	James: Two Philosophical Temperaments	<i>Pragmatism</i> Lecture I: "The Present Dilemma in Philosophy" 13-40	Paper 2: Peirce
R 7	James: The Pragmatic Method	<i>Pragmatism</i> Lecture II: "What Pragmatism Means" 43-50	
T 12	James: Pragmatic Theism	<i>Pragmatism</i> Lecture II: "What Pragmatism Means" 50-81	
R 14	James: Truth and Knowledge	<i>Pragmatism</i> Lecture VI: "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth" 197-205	
T 19	James: Truth and Knowledge	<i>Pragmatism</i> Lecture VI: "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth" 205-236	
R 21	THIS CLASS DOES NOT MEET. Dr. Lane is attending a conference.		
T 26	Discussion of term paper assignment. Introduction to Dewey	--	Paper 3: James
W 27	LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH A GRADE OF "W"		
R 28	Dewey: Theory vs. Practice	<i>The Quest for Certainty</i> ch.1 3-13	
Mar	Topic	reading due	tests / papers due
T 5	Dewey: Spectator Theories of Knowledge	<i>The Quest for Certainty</i> ch.1 13-25	
R 7	Dewey: Warranted Assertibility	<i>Logic: The Theory of Inquiry</i> ch.1 1-12	
T 12	Dewey: Logic	<i>Logic: The Theory of Inquiry</i> ch.1 12-22	
R 14	Dewey: Common Sense & Science	<i>Logic: The Theory of Inquiry</i> , ch.4 (all)	
T 19	No class meeting: Spring Break		
R 21	No class meeting: Spring Break		
T 26	Locke's "radical pragmatism"	Intro. by L. Harris; "The Ethics of Culture" 667-676	Paper 4: Dewey
R 28	Locke's "radical pragmatism"	"Values and Imperatives" 676-682	
Apr.	Topic	reading due	tests / papers due
T 2	Locke's "radical pragmatism"	"Values and Imperatives" 682-686	
R 4	Rorty's "vulgar pragmatism"	"Pragmatism, Relativism & Irrationalism" 719-723	Term Paper draft
T 9	Rorty's "vulgar pragmatism"	"Pragmatism, Relativism & Irrationalism" 723-727	Paper 5: Locke
R 11	Rorty's "vulgar pragmatism"	"Pragmatism, Relativism & Irrationalism" 727-738	
T 16	Haack: Concern for Truth	"Confessions of an Old-Fashioned Pig" 7-15	
R 18	Haack: Against Rorty	"Confessions of an Old-Fashioned Pig" 15-27	Paper 6: Rorty
T 23	Review	--	
R 25	Review / course evaluations	--	Term Paper
Final Exam			
Tuesday May 7, 11am-12:15pm			