

EL CAMINO COLLEGE
Behavioral and Social Sciences
PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy
Fall 2019

Painting by Caspar David Friedrich,
"Temple of Juno"



Instructor: Roberto Carlos García

Contact info: rogarcia@elcamino.edu

Class Website: rcgphi.com

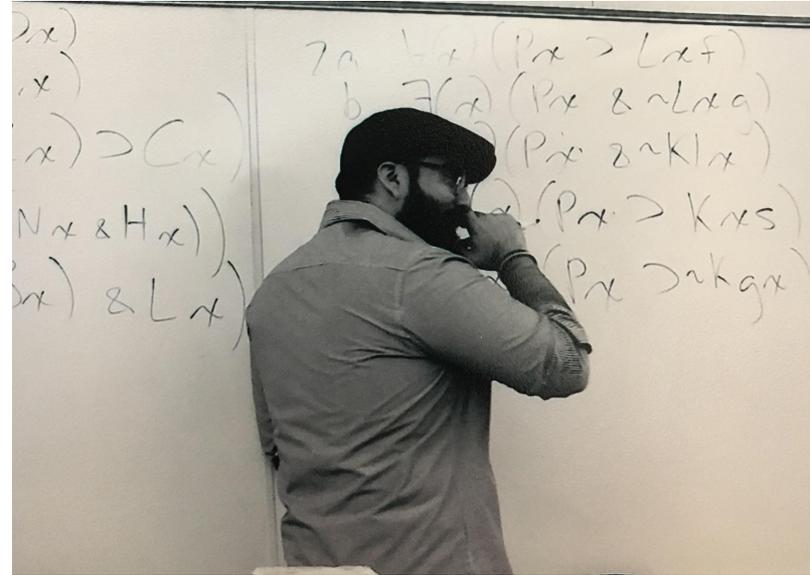
Bio:

Born in LA, raised in Mexico City.

I've been studying Philosophy since high school, but I also love to read Psychology, History, and Linguistics.

I enjoy writing computer code and playing piano.

And I can't say no to good food!



Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday
12:30 to 2pm or by appointment.

Course Description:

This course examines the main areas of philosophy, which include ethics, epistemology, and metaphysics. Students will explore values and beliefs, moral actions, freedom, the soul and God, and what constitutes a fulfilling life.



Questions to be covered:

What is real?

Does God exist?

Are we free?

Is there a real right and wrong?

Can computers think?

Student Learning Outcomes.

SLO#1 Epistemological Terminology- Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the basic epistemological terminology and issues, such as the source and basis of our beliefs, empiricism vs. rationalism, and the problem of induction.



SLO#2 Metaphysical Concepts and Arguments- Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the metaphysical concepts and arguments regarding such issues as free will vs determinism, the mind-body problem, and whether God exists.

SLO#3 Morality- Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of some of the basic issues and topics related to morality, such as justice, minority perspectives, moral objectivism vs. moral relativism, various ethical theories, and/or a basic understanding of how those theories can be applied to contemporary moral issues.

Course Objectives. By the end of the course, students should be able to:

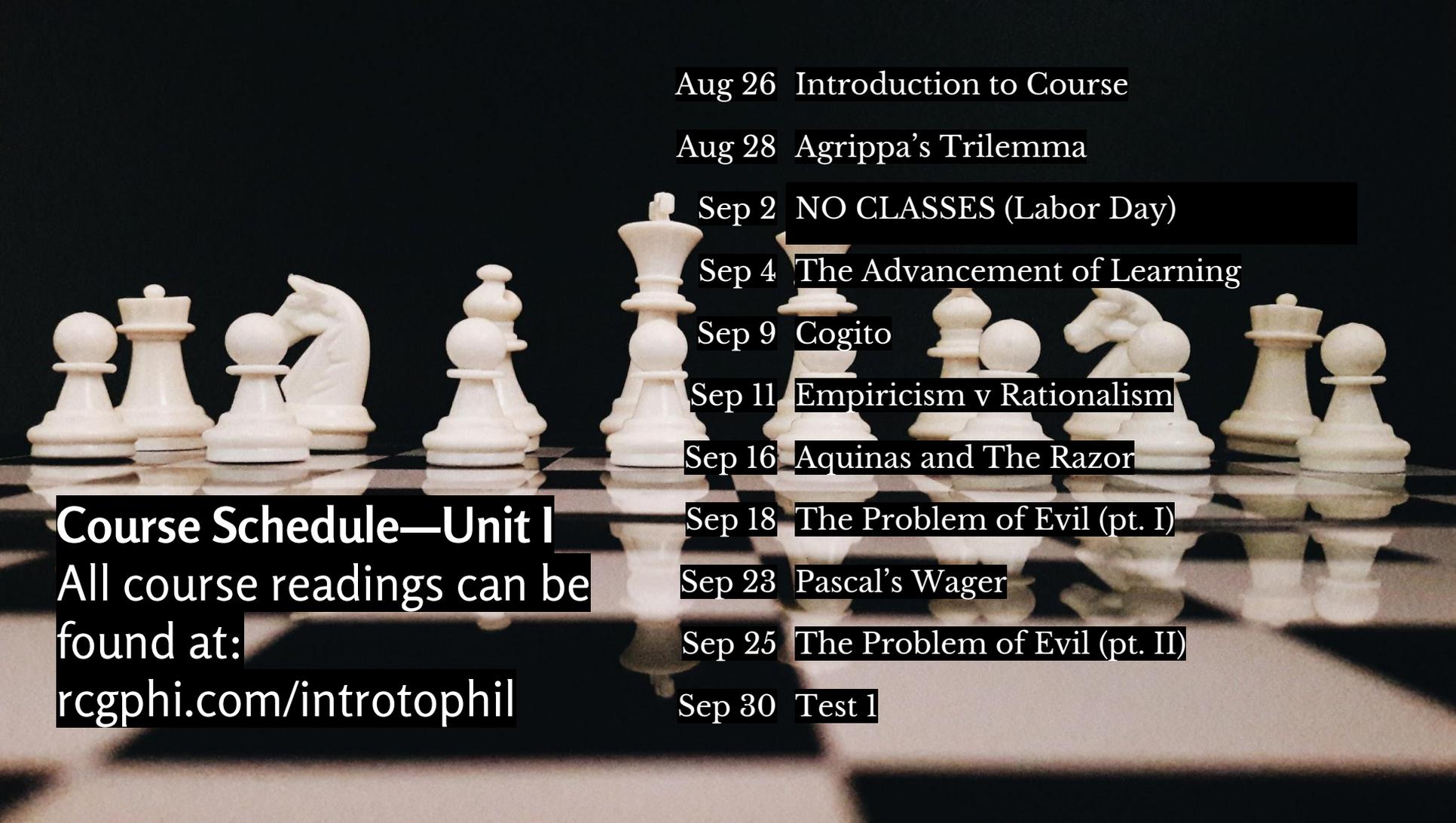
1. Explain and differentiate three main areas of philosophy: ethics, epistemology and metaphysics.
2. Explain the difference between knowledge and beliefs about the physical world (the realm of science) and knowledge and beliefs about moral issues and metaphysical things such as God, Heaven and Hell, and souls.
3. Assess and explain perspectives and outlooks on life that are beyond traditional societal paradigms, such as minority, feminist, and Taoist perspectives.
4. Distinguish between normative and descriptive ethics.
5. Explain the difference between duty ethics and consequentialism, and illustrate this difference by applying the theories to an ethical problem.
6. Differentiate moral relativism from moral objectivism, and explain their relationship to contemporary moral issues.
7. Discuss and analyze what constitutes a good and fulfilling life, such as the roles of money and happiness.



Course Objectives (Contd)

8. Analyze philosophical writing for its logical structure, coherence and acceptability, utilizing standard philosophical measures.
9. Identify and analyze metaphysical problems, such as the problem of free will versus determinism; the existence of God; the ultimate nature of reality; and the nature and existence of consciousness.
10. Clarify the difference between conviction, belief and knowledge.
11. Compare and contrast epistemological theories concerning the source, extent and limits of knowledge.
12. Analyze different systems of government, focusing especially on their justifications and their assumptions about human nature.
13. Compare the conflict between the ideals of equality and security with individualism and liberty.



A photograph of white chess pieces on a dark board, arranged in a line. The pieces include a pawn, a king, a knight, a queen, a rook, and a bishop. The background is dark, and the pieces are reflected on the surface below them.

Course Schedule—Unit I

All course readings can be found at:

rcgphi.com/introtophil

Aug 26 Introduction to Course

Aug 28 Agrippa's Trilemma

Sep 2 NO CLASSES (Labor Day)

Sep 4 The Advancement of Learning

Sep 9 Cogito

Sep 11 Empiricism v Rationalism

Sep 16 Aquinas and The Razor

Sep 18 The Problem of Evil (pt. I)

Sep 23 Pascal's Wager

Sep 25 The Problem of Evil (pt. II)

Sep 30 Test 1



Course Schedule—Unit II
All course readings can be
found at: rcgphi.com/introtophil

Oct 2 Laplace's Demon

Oct 7 The Person and The Situation

Oct 9 Libertarianism v Compatibilism

Oct 14 The Kingdom of Ends

Oct 16 The Trolley

Oct 21 Patterns of Culture

Oct 23 The Mind's I

Oct 28 The Birth of Right and Wrong

Oct 30 Annihilation

Nov 4 Test 2



Course Schedule—Unit III
All course readings can be
found at:
rcgphi.com/introtophil

Nov 6 $2 + 2 = 4$ (?)

Nov 11 NO CLASSES (Veterans Day)

Nov 13 The Master

Nov 18 The Mind/Body Problem

Nov 20 Universal Machines

Nov 25 The Chinese Room

Nov 27 The Turing Test

Dec 2 Buddhism

Dec 4 The Labyrinth

Dec 9 The Circular Ruins

Dec 11 Test 3

How to compute your grade!

There is a total of 200 points possible. There will be 3 short-answer tests valued at 50 points each. There is also a short essay worth 50 points. Grading Scale:

A (90-100%)	>180pts
B (80-89.9%)	160-179pts
C (70-79.9%)	140-159pts
D (60-69.9%)	120-139pts
F (below 60%)	<119pts

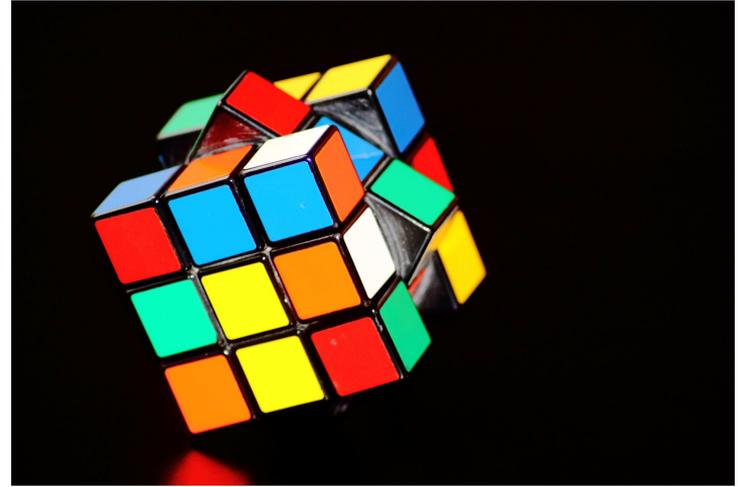
Keep track here!

Test 1:	
Test 2:	
Test 3:	
Short Essay:	
SUM:	

Tips for Success

This is a difficult class. Nevertheless, I have no doubt that if you are committed to doing the work, studying daily, and following the tips below, you will succeed in this course.

Philosophy is nothing more and nothing less than thinking hard and thinking well about a particular subject. For this reason, some can find it to be a difficult discipline. It requires a flexible mind that applies itself rigorously. In short, it requires work. The following are some tips that will help you be successful in this course. If taken to heart, the skills learned in this course can transcend their usefulness to all aspects of your life. A resilient mind, after all, comes in handy in a relentless world.





Reading. Reading philosophy is not like reading a novel or a comic. The material is usually very dense, often putting a lot of meaning and weight into a single sentence. The best way of reading philosophy is to do active reading. Read slowly, highlight, take notes, write on the margins, and make a summary of each paragraph and/or section in a reading journal. Active reading will ensure not only that you extract what the author is trying to convey, but also that when you revisit the material, review will be quicker and more efficient. This will also allow you to contrast your own views with that of the author's.

Discuss. Discuss with your peers. Philosophy is a dialectic enterprise. That is to say, it's a conversation; either a conversation with an interlocutor or with yourself. This will give you an opportunity to summarize the views of the author (as you understand them), as well as flesh out some of your thoughts on his/her view.



Engage in the Class. The concepts covered in this class will most come to light during lecture and classroom discussion. Make your very best effort to not miss a single day of class and complete all homework and reading before class. This will make sure you are primed for the lecture, that is to say that you're ready to do some philosophy. Pay attention, take notes, participate in discussion, and ask questions. That way you'll get the most out of the course and out of the discipline of philosophy in general.



Course Policies

Course Readings. All course readings and supplementary material will be made available on the course website: rcgphi.com.

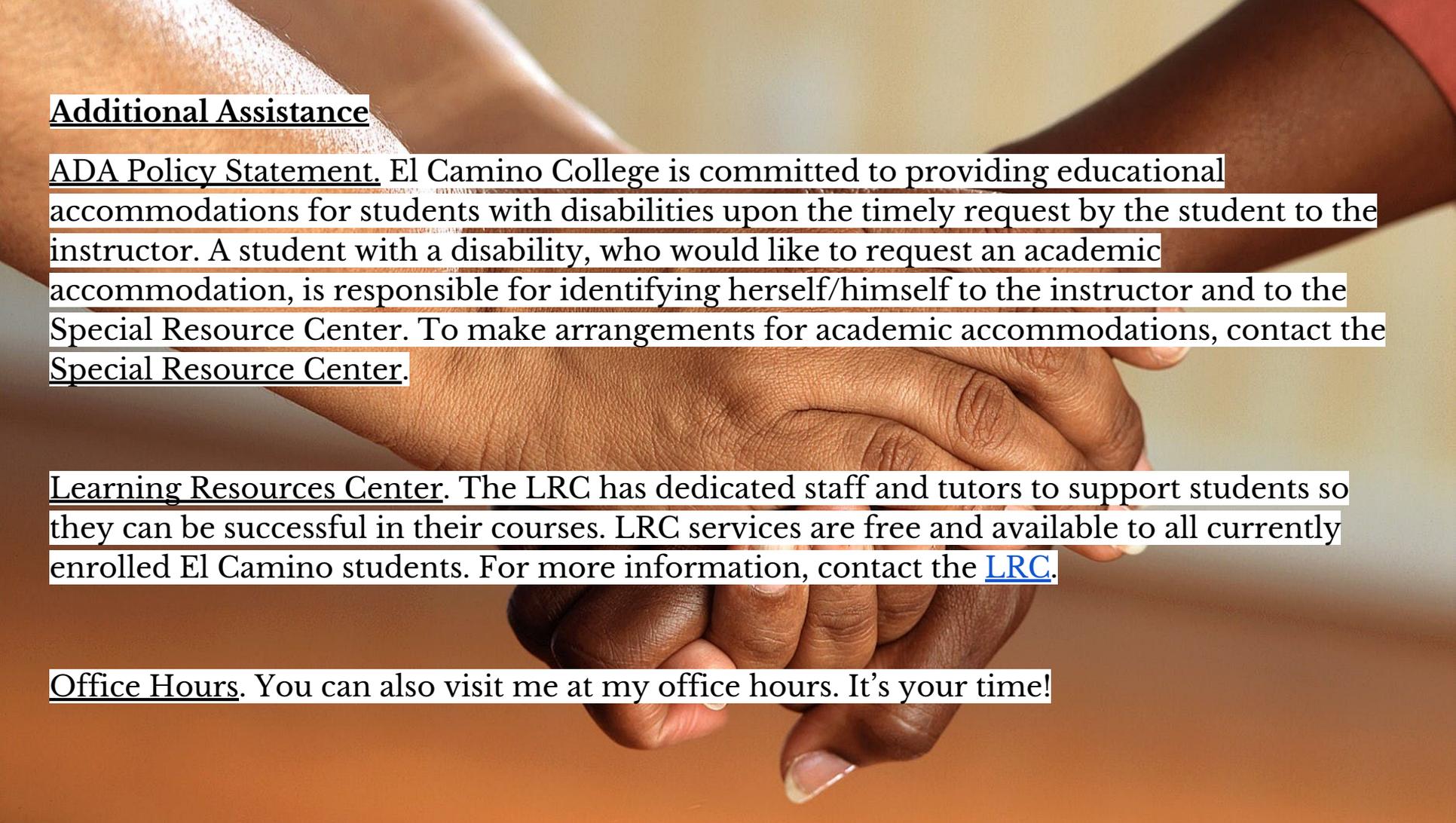
Attendance. Students are expected to attend their classes regularly. Students who miss the first class meeting or who are not in regular attendance during the add period for the class may be dropped by the instructor. Students are responsible for dropping a class within the deadlines published in the class schedule. Students who stop attending but do not drop may receive a failing grade.

Note: If a student is absent on the day of a test, the student is responsible for scheduling a meeting with me to make-up the exam.

Respect. Due to dialectic nature of this class, respectful and courteous class discussion is essential.

Academic Integrity. Please see [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Electronics. Please deactivate all electronic devices: cell phones, voice recorders, laptops, etc.- unless exempt by Special Resource Center.



Additional Assistance

ADA Policy Statement. El Camino College is committed to providing educational accommodations for students with disabilities upon the timely request by the student to the instructor. A student with a disability, who would like to request an academic accommodation, is responsible for identifying herself/himself to the instructor and to the Special Resource Center. To make arrangements for academic accommodations, contact the Special Resource Center.

Learning Resources Center. The LRC has dedicated staff and tutors to support students so they can be successful in their courses. LRC services are free and available to all currently enrolled El Camino students. For more information, contact the [LRC](#).

Office Hours. You can also visit me at my office hours. It's your time!