Boston College Mission Statement

Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description

This course introduces students to philosophical reflection and to its history through the presentation and discussion of the writings of major thinkers from ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary periods. The course is designed to show how fundamental and enduring questions about the universe and about human beings recur in different historical contexts. Emphasis is given to ethical themes, such as the nature of the human person, the foundation of human rights and corresponding responsibilities, and the problems of social justice.

Texts (All in Canvas)

- Plato, Republic (Basic Books, translated by Alan Bloom)
- Apology, in Plato, Five Dialogues (Hackett, translated by G.M.A. Grube and J.M. Cooper)
- Sophist (University of Chicago Press, translated by Seth Benardete)
- Statesman (University of Chicago Press, translated by Seth Benardete)
- Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics (Prentice Hall, translated by Martin Ostwald)
- Metaphysics (Peripatetic Press, translated by H. G. Apostle)
- Epictetus, The Handbook (Hackett, translated by Nicholas P. White)
Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy* (Harvard University Press, translated by David R. Slavitt)

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* (Novantiqua, CreateSpace)


Deleuze, “Plato and the Simulacrum”, in Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense* (Columbia University Press / Continuum, translated by Mark Lester)

**Canvas**

Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) at Boston College, designed to help faculty and students share ideas, collaborate on assignments, discuss course readings and materials, submit assignments, and much more - all online. As a Boston College student, you should familiarize yourself with this important tool. For more information and training resources for using Canvas, click [here](#).

**Course Objectives**

1. The student will learn *how to practice* philosophy. Since the philosophical practice is mainly linguistic, the student will learn *how to read philosophy, how to write philosophy, and how to orally discuss philosophy*.
2. The student will learn the philosophical content *in practice*. Philosophical ideas and problems will be presented and discussed by means of everyday experiences.
3. The student will demonstrate the ability to formulate problems across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, and age in philosophical deliberation.
4. The student will demonstrate the ability to formulate philosophical problems relative to ethics, politics, metaphysics, epistemology, and aesthetics.

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&gt; 95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 94 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 – 86 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 82 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 – 76 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 72 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65 – 69 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>≤ 64 %</td>
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</tbody>
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The undergraduate grading system for Summer Session is as follows:

A (4.00), A- (3.67)
B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67)
C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67)
D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67)
F (.00)

All students can access final grades through Agora after the grading deadline each semester. Transcripts are available through the [Office of Student Services](#).
Evaluation

To learn how to philosophize is to learn how to read, how to write and how to discuss orally. The course evaluation is focused on these three skills. Specific instructions for the assignments will be given in class.

Attendance / Participation (20%)

Attendance is mandatory. You are expected to be present for every class meeting. You may miss up to two class meetings without consequences. After this, each absence will reduce your overall grade in the course by one grade increment (e.g., an A to an A-).

Individual participation about the reading assignments is encouraged. Without actively participating and being engaged in class, you will not earn the maximum participation score. It is mandatory to bring the text to class.

Reading Quizzes / Writing Assignments (40%)

You will demonstrate you have read the texts by participating in class and through the quizzes. There will be a maximum of 3 non-scheduled reading quizzes throughout the course. Any day can be quizzing day, so you will need to keep on top of the readings.

There will be a number of short writing assignments on the readings. They will be announced in class, and should be typed (12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1-inch margins). No late papers.

Final (40%): The format of the Final Exam will be announced in class.

Course Assignments

It is expected that you will spend 8 hours per week on out-of-class assignments and exercises. Please note that some weeks will require more time and some weeks less time. An important part of these work will be done online through Canvas.

Reading Schedule (Note that all readings and assignments are subject to change)

Wednesday, May 17  “What are we expected to do in Philosophy of the Person?” + Plato, Apology

Monday, May 22  Plato, Apology & Republic
Wednesday, May 24  Plato, Republic

Monday, May 29  Plato, Republic
Wednesday, May 31  Plato, Sophist, Statement & Republic + Deleuze, “Plato and the Simulacrum”

Monday, June 5  Aristotle, Metaphysics & Nicomachean Ethics
Wednesday, June 7  Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics

Monday, June 12  Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics + Gadamer, “The Hermeneutical Relevance […]”
Wednesday, June 14  Epictetus, Handbook

Monday, June 19  Boethius, Consolation of Philosophy
Wednesday, June 21  Aquinas, Summa
Written Work

Summer Session students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed and submitted in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA or CLA style per your instructor’s requirements. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. For writing support, please contact the Connors Family Learning Center.

Attendance

Attending class is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. When circumstances prevent a student from attending class, the student is responsible for contacting the instructor before the class meets. Students who miss class are still expected to complete all assignments and meet all deadlines. Makeup work may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. Please, see “Evaluation”.

Consistent with BC’s commitment to creating a learning environment that is respectful of persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing their academic status. Students are responsible for reviewing course syllabi as soon as possible, and for communicating with the instructor promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. Students are responsible for completing all class requirements for days missed due to conflicts with religious holidays.

Accommodation and Accessibility

Boston College is committed to providing accommodations to students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. Specific documentation from the appropriate office is required for students seeking accommodation in Summer Session courses. Advanced notice and formal registration with the appropriate office is required to facilitate this process. There are two separate offices at BC that coordinate services for students with disabilities:

- The Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC) coordinates services for students with LD and ADHD.
- The Disabilities Services Office (DSO) coordinates services for all other disabilities.

Find out more about BC’s commitment to accessibility at www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility.

Scholarship and Academic Integrity

Students in Summer Session courses must produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to cite references is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, or submitting the same material or substantially similar material to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work. Please see the Boston College policy on academic integrity for more information.

Technology and Food

Electronics and food are not allowed in the classroom. Drinks are permitted.