The assessment for this class is determined by performance on in class exams and reading response assignments.

Assignment	Due date and time	Point value
Midterm exam	March 6 in class	100pts
Final exam	May 9 @ 8a	100pts
Reading responses	See schedule	4 @ 25pts = 100pts
	Total	300 points

1 Exams

This class will have two exams. The first will be held at the approximate midpoint of the semester, and the second will be given on the scheduled day of the final. The final exam will cover only the material introduced after the first exam.

The purpose of the exams is for you to demonstrate your understanding of the philosophical concepts, methods, and arguments introduced in class lectures.

1.1 Format

Each exam is worth **100 points** and has two parts:

1. Short answer questions (30 points)
   - The short answer questions will test your ability to recall the philosophical concepts introduced in class.
   - There will be some fill in the blank questions, as well as questions that ask you to state particular principles or premises of interest.
   - Complete responses to these questions should require no more than one or two sentences.
2. Extended response questions (70 points)
   - The extended answer questions will test your comprehension of the philosophical discussions covered in class.
   - You will be expected to explain clearly and succinctly certain philosophical arguments, positions, and principles.
   - You will be expected to answer **five** of the **seven** short answer questions that are provided. Only five responses will be graded, so if you answer more, please indicate which responses you want to be graded.
   - It is difficult to give a definitive length for these responses. The most accurate advice I can give is that you should answer the question completely. A more informative answer is that the response should be at least a paragraph and likely two in most cases.

1.2 Grading

The grade for each of your answers will be determined by the **accuracy, completeness, and clarity** of your responses, with these components roughly equally weighted.

- A response that fails to address material relevant to the question will be docked for its incompleteness.
- A response that misconstrues the material, or includes excessive material not relevant to the question will be docked for its inaccuracy.
- A response that is hard to read or to follow, or a response that appears to be a mere regurgitation of various keywords from the notes will be docked for its unclarity.

2 Reading responses

Critical reading of texts is an invaluable skill in philosophical investigation. The reading response assignments are designed to help you develop this skill.[1]

2.1 Format

- Reading responses are short writing assignments. They should be **2-3 pages**[2] and have two parts:
  1. *Exegesis*: A summary of a portion of the reading under discussion, including argument premises, key theses, and significant implications. This part is intended for you to display your reading comprehension; the summary should be in your own words, and direct quotation should be used only sparingly.
  2. *Critique*: An analysis of the philosophical content of the reading under discussion. The nature of this section is fairly open ended. Some options include: a development of a critique of the author's thesis, an alternative to the author's proposal, an application of the author's proposal to an aspect of daily life, a comparison of the theory to alternative theories.
- You should dedicate approximately equal space to each part.
- The first page of your response should include **your name**, **the title of the article under discussion**, and **the assignment due date**.
- Reading responses should be saved in **PDF format**[3] and submitted via the assignments tab on the course Sakai page.

2.2 Grading

Each reading response is worth **25 points**. The exegesis and critique are worth 10 points each, with an additional 5 points for the overall clarity of the response.

The grading criteria for each section are as follows, with the criteria roughly equally weighted:

- Exegesis
  - *Accuracy*: The exegsis should accurately portray the author's position.
  - *Focus*: One cannot possibly summarize an entire philosophy paper in 1.5 pages. So it is important to focus one's discussion on a specific portion of the reading.
  - *Detail*: In philosophical writing, the method one uses and the arguments one employs are just as important as the conclusion one argues for. So it is important to present the details of the portion of the reading you focus on.
- Critique
  - *Originality*: You are not expected to revolutionize the field of philosophy, but your critique should reflect your own thinking on the issue.
  - *Relevance*: The critique should address the issues presented in the exegesis.
  - *Specificity*: When offering a critique, it is important to be clear on just what issue one is objecting to. Broad generalizations can be provocative, but it is attention to the specific issues that makes a critique compelling.

[1] Thus reading responses may be viewed as parallel to lab reports in an introductory science class.
[2] Double spaced, 11-12pt font, 1in margins.
[3] Most current word processing programs allow you to export files as PDF. If you are uncertain how to do this, please learn.

2.3 Schedule

You will be expected to submit 4 reading responses throughout the course of the semester. Thus, the reading response portion of your grade comprises 100 points. You have a variety of options for which readings to focus on; you can determine for yourself which of the readings most interests you. However, you may only submit one response per due date.[4]

You may submit 5 responses in total. If you do so, the lowest grade you receive will be dropped.

The schedule of due dates for the responses is as follows:

Due Date	Relevant readings
January 30	Russell: *Appearance and reality and the existence of matter* (p. 175) Plato: *Knowledge as justified, true, belief* (p. 167)
February 6	Hume: *An inquiry concerning human understanding* (p. 237 through sect. 5, part 1) Kitcher: *Believing where we cannot prove* (p. 286)
February 13	Churchland: *Functionalism and eliminative materialism* (p. 327) Turing: *Computing machinery and intelligence* (p. 335)
February 27	Reid: *Of Mr. Locke's account of our personal identity* (p. 376) Parfit: *Divided minds and the nature of persons* (p. 381)
March 19	Paley: *The argument from design* (p. 46) Hume: *Dialogues concerning natural religion* (p. 52 through part 3)
March 26	Johnson: *God and the problem of evil* (p. 113) Chisholm: *Human freedom and the self* (p. 430)
April 9	Mill: *Utilitarianism* (p. 597) Rawls: *Justice as fairness* (p. 579)
April 16	Singer: *Famine, affluence, and morality* (p. 630) Singer: *Unsanctifying human life* (p. 645)

[4] I advise you to not wait until the final 4 due dates to start submitting. You will be better served if you space them out over the entire term.