

PHL 2800
Library and Information Research in Philosophy
Fall 2009 Time: Wed, 12:00 – 12:50 PM
Place: Belk Library Classroom 024
Course content located at: <http://asulearn.appstate.edu/>

Professors

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COURSE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES

PHL 2800, Library and Information Research for Philosophy is a one-hour credit course to help students develop, expand, and refine their research skills and information fluency with a special focus on resources in philosophy. Though this course was designed primarily for majors in philosophy --and is a prerequisite course for the capstone course, *PHL 4700, Senior Research*-- the knowledge and skills acquired will benefit all researchers of the humanities or social sciences.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS COURSE

1. Refine researchers' understanding of scholarly resources and ability at finding and selecting them This course will examine different types of scholarly communication and differentiate how each interacts with the others to serve the spectrum of scholarship.

Understand the spectrum (range) and taxonomy (types) of scholarly communication from the informal discussion of blogs to the formality of peer-reviewed journal articles and monographic (book) publishing and reflect upon how each type may be useful to your research. You will also understand the value of popular vs. scholarly resources for different kinds of research.

Clarify your understanding of primary and secondary resources and how these interplay in your research.

Discover and understand the purpose of specialized reference sources in philosophy (such as philosophy dictionaries, encyclopedias of

philosophy and other discipline-specific guides). Explore their use in selecting and refining a topic as well as clarifying key terms and concepts.

Gain confidence in identifying, comparing and selecting online information sources relevant to your research topic. How does the use of Philosopher's Index differ from a search of another library database or Google Scholar?

2. Become a better online researcher – Students will reflect on the research process and **develop advanced searching techniques** to get more accurate and fruitful results when searching online resources.

Understand the importance of **determining the scope, direction, and sequence of resource selection** that can differ from one topic to another.

Become competent at formulating a research strategy, adept at choosing appropriate keywords, and skilled at using Boolean logic in building complex searches of electronic resources.

Develop efficiency at utilizing special search features of online resources such as truncating search terms, limiting searches to specific document types, date of publication, or subject terms.

3. Become a more critical evaluator of information and publications found – Students will develop criteria for determining quality differences among publications such as books, articles, or texts found on the web and develop the evaluative skills to determine the relative quality and usefulness of information found.

4. Develop an understanding of the importance in scholarship of contributing to the map of knowledge history by giving proper attribution to previous creators of knowledge through the use of formal citation of sources incorporated within your research. Become adept at utilizing various online tools that help make citing publications easier. Then **incorporate citations gathered from your searches into an annotated bibliography on a topic of your choice**.

WEEKLY LECTURES, DISCUSSIONS, READINGS & QUIZES

The PHL 2800 course is composed of live classroom meetings and online course material. We will meet weekly for 50 minutes in Belk Library Classroom 024 (lower level of the Belk Library) for lecture, group discussion and live practice.

The course will incorporate the **ASULearn** website for posting assignments, readings and quizzes. <http://asulearn.appstate.edu/>. It is important to consult the ASULearn site for readings, assignments and their due dates every week. It is also important to complete the assignments and quizzes during the week each is assigned as **assignments and quizzes will not be accepted after their due dates.**

SELECTING A RESEARCH TOPIC FOR RESEARCH PRACTICE AND FOR THE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY PROJECT

At the start of the course you will select a topic that you will use to practice searching various online resources. The topic **must be related to a philosophical approach, issue, concept, problem, or movement** that interests you. You will focus upon this topic in most assignments as you refine your skills in doing library and information research throughout the course. The topic should be broad enough to yield results in online resources ranging from encyclopedias of philosophy to article databases but narrow enough to not produce an overwhelming number of results from a basic search.

Remember that you are choosing a general philosophical TOPIC for practicing online research and not a THESIS to argue a specific philosophical position in a paper. Selecting and refining a thesis will come during your capstone course].

GRADES - Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Participation = 25%

This is a participatory course in which all students are expected to:

1. **Read materials when assigned** (The instructor module allows me to see when you have accessed materials from the online part of the course. Your online presence or lack thereof will affect your participation grade)
2. **Contribute actively to discussions.** Students' work and discussion in class and online will be calculated as part of the overall participation grade.
3. **Attend all classes.** I expect attendance at all class sessions and that students will arrive before class begins. Only extreme cases of medical or personal emergencies *approved before class* will be excused. ***Each unexcused absence will result in a significant decrease in the participation portion of the grade.***

Quizzes & Assignments = 50% [Due weekly]

It is important to continually assess if every student has absorbed the material and concepts presented so questions related to lectures, discussions and reading as well as exercises related to the topics will be assigned.

Annotated Bibliography Project = 25% [Due Dec 2, 2009]

This is essentially a documentation of the best, most focused items (encyclopedia entries, articles, books, and web sources) found in support of the student's chosen philosophical topic. It is composed of an introduction and a list of citations with each citation containing an "annotation" describing the item and why it was chosen and how it directly supports the topic. The annotations for this bibliography have specific content requirements peculiar to this course so read the instructions carefully when they are distributed early in the semester.

GRADE SCALE

94 - 100 = A	76 - 74 = C
90 - 93 = A	73 - 70 = C
89 - 87 = B+	69 - 67 = D+
86 - 84 = B	66 - 64 = D
83 - 80 = B	63 - 60 = D
79 - 77 = C+	Below 60 = F

Academic Integrity Code

As a community of learners at Appalachian State University, we must create an atmosphere of honesty, fairness, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of each other. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of an Appalachian degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form and will oppose any instance of academic dishonesty. This course will follow the provisions of the Academic Integrity Code, which can be found on the Office of Student Conduct Web Site: www.studentconduct.appstate.edu.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Appalachian State University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Those seeking accommodations based on a substantially limiting disability must contact and register with The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at <http://www.ods.appstate.edu> or 828-262-3056. Once registration is complete, individuals will meet with ODS staff to discuss eligibility and appropriate accommodations.