**PHI 101 Introduction to Philosophy: A World-Historical Perspective**

**PHI 101LEC-LAW (13343)**

**Tuesday, Thursday, 11:00 AM - 12:20 PM, Fillmore 355****Dr. James Lawler**

TA for the course: **Bhavya Sharma**

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2 - 4:00 PM at Park, 159.

Email: [bhavyago@buffalo.edu](mailto:bhavyago@buffalo.edu)

**Course Description**

The course will provide a general description of the basic philosophies of different major civilizations evolving in world history. The historical background to the development of world philosophies will provide context for the understanding of distinctly philosophical development.

Philosophies provide general meanings to human life in reflective form with rational justifications, rather than in the form of religion with its appeal to emotion and its dependence on authority and tradition. The first worldviews that evolve into philosophical worldviews are the early religions of the world, beginning with the animistic outlook of hunter-gatherers in which human beings understand themselves in a spiritual/emotional connection with the surrounding natural world.

The major philosophies of India and China, the philosophies of the East, provide philosophical reflective meanings that are continuous with this animistic background, while the philosophies of the West, beginning with Greek philosophy, break from such animistic unity with the surrounding world. The course first examines the major philosophical concepts of the ancient civilizations of India, China, and Greece in the context of distinctive historical characteristics of these three civilizations. The course then concludes with the development of the early philosophies of Western Europe—as both a development and transformation of ancient Greek philosophy under the impulse of the new sciences of the modern era.

**Course Materials:**

David E. Cooper, *World Philosophies: An Historical Introduction*. Second Edition.

**Schedule of Lectures**

1. Weeks 1-3: China (Cooper 58-74; 80-91)

Historical Introduction  
The Character of Chinese Philosophy  
Confucianism  
Taoism

2. Weeks 3-6: India (Cooper 13-57; 221-231)

The “Schools” and their Framework  
 Nyaya and Vaisheshika  
 Samkhya and Yoga  
 Advaita Vedanta  
 Buddhism  
 Zen Buddhism

3. Weeks 6-10: Greece (Cooper 92-145)

Legacies  
 Naturalism and Relativism  
 Plato  
 Aristotle  
 Epicureanism, Skepticism, and Stoicism

4. Weeks 10-14: From Renaissance to Enlightenment (Cooper 241-290)

Humanism and the Rise of Modern Science  
 Descartes  
 From Berkeley to Hume  
 Hobbes’ Materialism  
 Locke and Berkeley  
 Leibniz

**Course Requirements**

1) Weekly quizzes: 50% of the grade. The lowest two quizzes will be dropped. This includes unexcused absences. Students will be excused for important reasons such as medical needs, with documentation.

2) Final exam (comprehensive): 50% of the grade. Final exam date: May 14, 2019, 11:45-2:45, Fillmore 355.

Grading scale

* 90-100 A 78-79 B- 65-67 D+
* 88-89 A- 77-77 C+ 60-64 D
* 85-87 B+ 70-74 C 59 and below F
* 80-84 B 68-69 C-

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a fundamental university value. Through the honest completion of academic work, students sustain the integrity of the university while facilitating the university's imperative for the transmission of knowledge and culture based upon the generation of new and innovative ideas.

* Reference to the university [Undergraduate Academic Integrity Policy](http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml) and any additional instructor requirements and comments regarding academic dishonesty.

Accessibility Resources

If you have any disability which requires reasonable accommodations to enable you to participate in this course, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources, 25 Capen Hall, 645-2608, and also the instructor of this course. The Office of [Accessibility Resources](http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/ods/) will provide you with information and review appropriate arrangements for reasonable

accommodations.

**Writing resources:** the Center for Excellence in Writing (<http://www.buffalo.edu/cas/writing.html>) provides support for written work, and several tutoring centers on campus provide academic success support and resources.

**Office Hours for Dr. Lawler**

Tuesday and Thursday, 4 to 5 p.m., in Park 131, and by appointment ([jlawler@buffalo.edu](mailto:jlawler@buffalo.edu))