Teaching Dossier

JEFFREY NEAL BAGWELL

University of California, Santa Barbara
FALL2021

Table of Contents

Teaching Statement

In pursuing my PhD at the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB), I have developed my teaching methods over twelve quarters as a teaching assistant, and three as sole instructor, in a range of philosophical subjects. As sole instructor, I've taught *Introduction to Philosophy* and *Introduction to Ethics* to large (180+) groups of students from diverse backgrounds and majors. As a Teaching Assistant, I've taught small sections of 30 students (two sections per course) in subjects as diverse as *Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics*, *Critical Thinking*, *Ancient Philosophy*, and *Philosophy of Science*. Outside the classroom, I've expanded my knowledge and skills by attending a series of teaching workshops that culminate in the *Pillars of Teaching Assistantship* certificate, completing a pedagogy course (*Teaching: From Theory to Practice*), pursuing UCSB's pedagogy certification (*Certificate in College and University Teaching*, or *CCUT*), and co-leading a graduate reading group on diversity and pedagogy.

In my teaching I use activities and assignments that promote active learning and metacognition, engage the students' desire for novelty and play, and promote lively discussion. In addition, I find various ways to solicit feedback so I can make course corrections and make sure my courses are effective for a given student body.

I try to ease the transition many students may have reading works of philosophy for the first time by acquainting them with some general-purpose tools. For instance, I have them read a selection from David Concepcion's "Reading Philosophy with Background and Metacognition" and practice it on our course readings. I've had students for whom this technique instantly clicked (One wrote on a midterm survey, "the "How to Read Philosophy" paper at the beginning really helped, and it continues to be effective to this day"). Though the method is robust and flexible, I have my students start by just focusing on the practice of "flagging" important things in the margin of their text, and then refining the flag (Is it a premise in an argument? An important example? A key term?). My mantra to my students: *Put down your highlighter, pick up your pencil!* This approach fosters active reading and metacognition because it trains students to know *why* they are marking something. Because a pencil allows correction upon re-reading, it also illustrates that there is no such thing as "perfect" understanding of a text. (I sometimes share pages of my notes, which betray countless erasures.)

In my sections, I've assigned reading responses for each piece we cover in lecture, having students bring in their typed or handwritten responses to section for use in discussion. In addition to basic questions like whether they enjoyed the piece and what was the author's thesis, I ask: *What was the oddest or most puzzling thing the author said (or perhaps a puzzling omission)?* This last question was particularly effective in drawing out student discussion. Sometimes the odd thing a student notices will seem trivial, but will lead to important insights. In our discussion of Judith Jarvis Thomson's "A Defense of Abortion," one student commented that it was odd for Thomson to claim she had no right to the cool touch of Henry Fonda's hand. "Who exactly is Henry Fonda and why does Thomson assume every woman is hot over him?" After I explained who he was and the class considered current cinema idols that might inspire such devotion, students started playing with the example in interesting ways. Some students wanted to make it more realistic ("What if I had a very rare illness and only one scientist had the cure?"), but some noticed that the oddness of the example suggested the subjectivity of some human values and what we're willing to call *needs* ("What if Thomson just thought a life without Henry Fonda's

touch *isn't worth living*? Does that make it necessary for her life, and does she thereby have a right to it?"). What's strange grabs attention and engages the mind like clickbait. I'm working on different ways of harnessing this, but sometimes it's best to just ask a straightforward question.

One of my favorite strategies is to turn a potentially stressful learning experience into a game for students, engaging their desire for novelty and play. For instance, I turned our final exam review for upper division ethics into a game of "Jeffpardy." I found a PowerPoint template complete with visuals and sounds from the game *Jeopardy!* and I wrote up review questions and answers. We started section by watching a goofy two-minute YouTube video of a game of *Jeopardy!* in which every contestant's name, as well as every question and answer, was "Jeff." I had the students form teams and compete for first dibs on a bowl of candy (but it was really for the glory). The payoff: an incredibly fun and productive couple of sections, and student comments like "Jeffpardy was one of the most entertaining lesson plans I've ever experienced. It was also very effective."

In section, I've had students use the first session of class to set ground rules for discussion. This takes some work, but it encourages reflection on the practice of discussion, gets the students invested in the rules for class discussions, and helps me know what best helps them learn in the classroom. I write on the board two headings: *What makes for good discussions* and *What makes for poor discussions* and have each student come up and write something after discussing the questions in groups for a few minutes. For example, a common frustration of students is that if one student in the front is always dominating the discussion, the quieter students in back are less likely to get involved and will simply become frustrated and less invested in the class. In one class, we tried out a version of the "three-person rule," the practice of letting three other people contribute after you've made a comment or given an answer. It can be tricky to implement, but it did seem to mitigate the front-row dominator problem. I'm looking forward to trying other strategies to encourage quieter students to participate.

I also solicit feedback by embedding open-ended questions in regular, formative assessments like quizzes, as well as asking feedback questions during lectures (via iClicker) and issuing online surveys. For instance, in future iterations of my online quizzes, I'm building in questions such as: "What was your reaction to your performance on the quiz?" and "What aspect of lecture most helped your comprehension of the material?" This encourages metacognitive reflection on their study processes and their interactions with the lecture course itself. I regularly ask my students what was the "muddiest point" in the preceding lecture and use this as a cue to briefly review that material as well as to (later, privately) reassess and potentially improve my presentation of the material. I also issue midterm surveys to my larger classes, and these have been tremendously helpful. For instance, students overwhelmingly appreciate the "muddiest point" exercise, so it's a keeper (with some tweaking). I've learned that the way I word quiz questions can sometimes be tricky for non-native speakers, so I've developed ways of simplifying my wording that seem to benefit all students. Sometimes a single student's comment can make a permanent difference in my teaching. A student mentioned that my examples use gendered pronouns where it isn't needed, and I realized they were correct: I now omit these or substitute gender-neutral pronouns (except where this would introduce ambiguity).

I look forward to experimenting with new pedagogical techniques as I continue to teach. My love for the subject impels me to not only push my own understanding, but to find better and better ways to encourage my students to do the same.

Student Evaluations

What follows are charts of student evaluations (captured in ESCI surveys), starting with classes I've taught as sole instructor and continuing to those for which I've been a teaching assistant. Students rate the instructor or TA for various categories according to the following scale:

1=Excellent

2=Very Good

3=Good

4=Fair

5=Poor

Please note that **1 is the highest possible score**.

Where appropriate, I've also provided the relevant campus (or department) average for instructors or TAs. These averages are based on data gathered over a particular 5-year period. The relevant 5-year average for two courses (or sets of courses) will differ. In addition, summer courses and online-only courses are each subject to their own separate set of campus averages. This accounts for the way campus averages seem to move up and down in the charts showing my TA evaluations over time.

Each course I've taught as sole instructor was a large lecture class with an enrollment of approximately 180 students.[1] Courses for which I was a teaching assistant always consisted of two separate discussion sections with an enrollment of approximately 30 students each. In a particular academic quarter, I've plotted the average of the scores in both sections.

The Spring 2020 ESCI evaluations were online-only, and followed a separate format, which consisted of one question on the TA's overall effectiveness, and two open-ended questions that asked students what was effective and what could be improved. I have included the first question under "TA Overall Performance Over Time," but for the other six questions that are included in paper ESCI evaluations there is only data up to the Fall 2019 quarter.
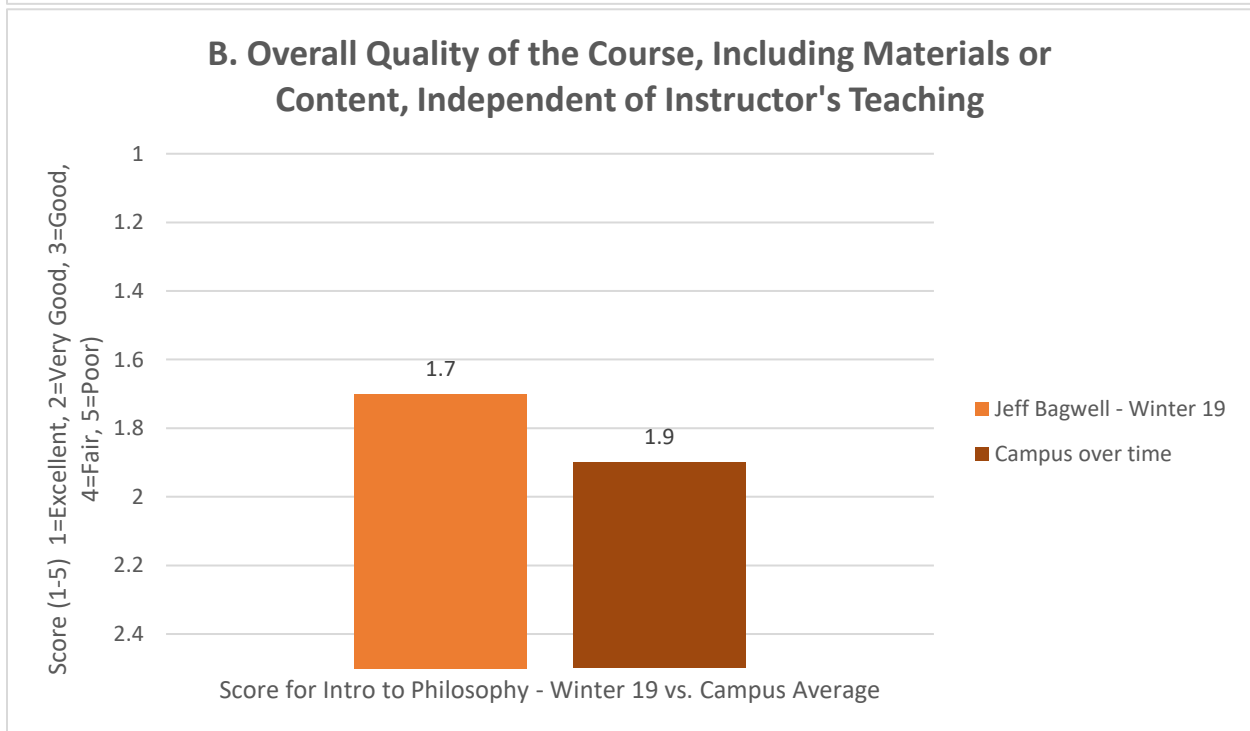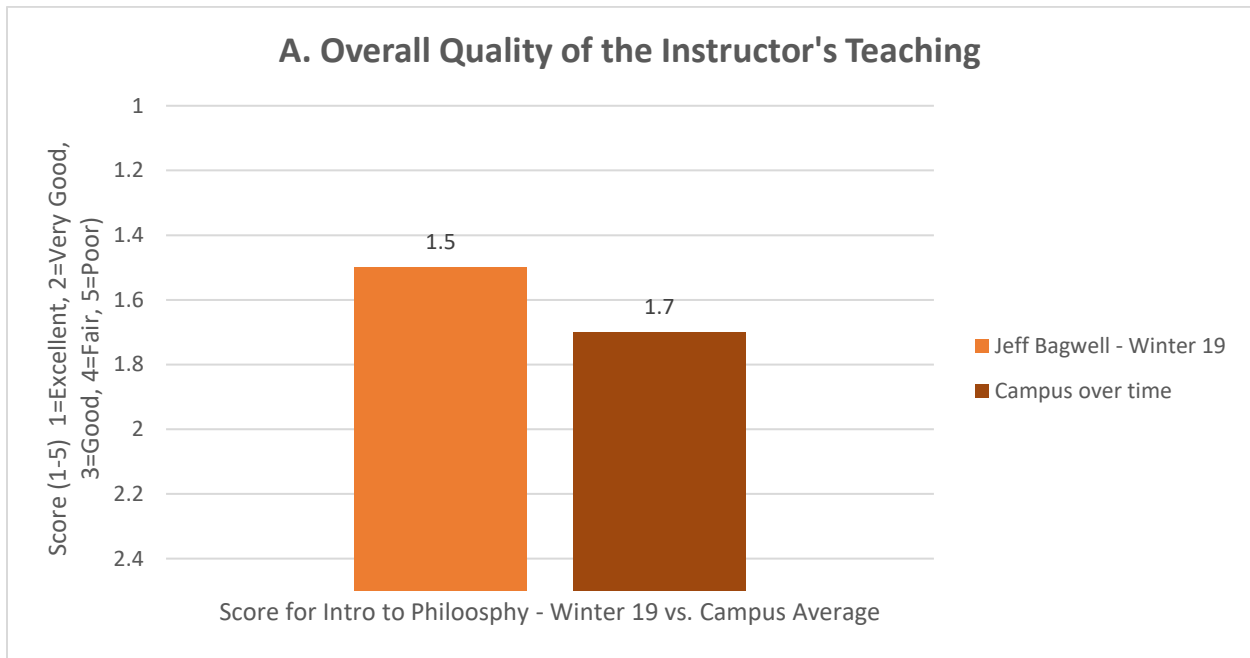
---

[1] Note that student evaluations are not available for my second course taught as sole instructor: *Intro to Ethics*. The results of an anonymous midterm survey for that course are available on my website.

As Sole Instructor
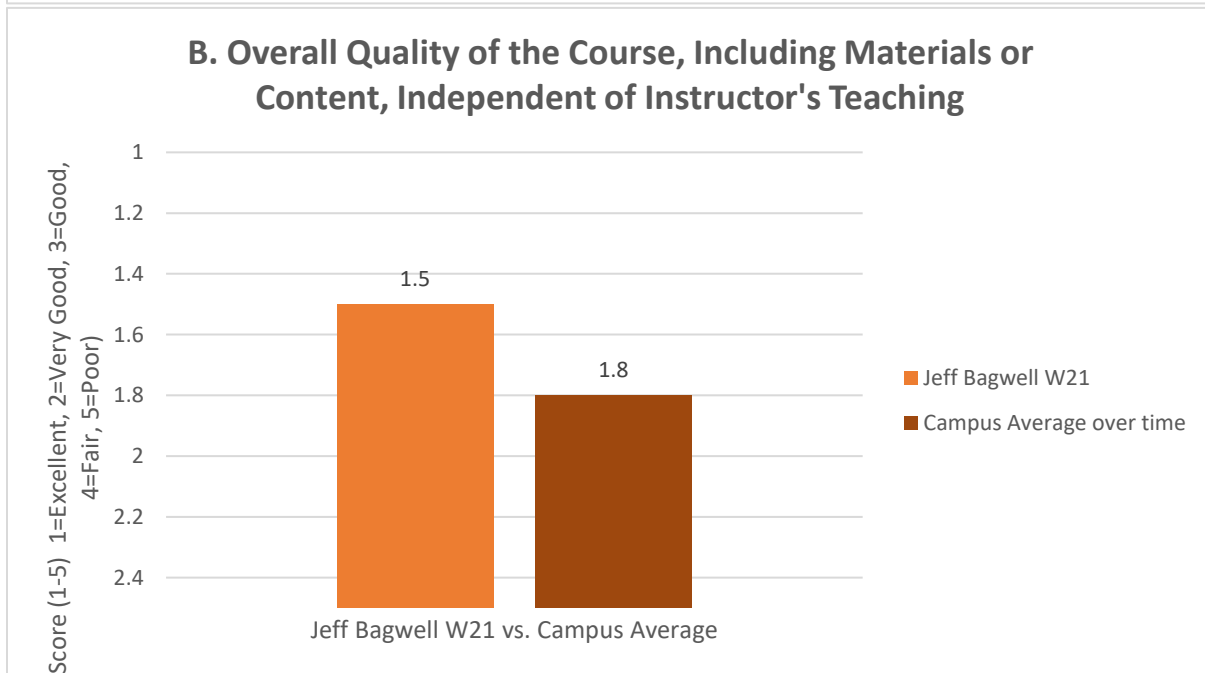
Introduction to Philosophy

1 = Excellent (top score)

A. Overall Quality of the Instructor's Teaching

Score (1-5) 1=Excellent, 2=Very Good, 3=Good, 4=Fair, 5=Poor)

1.5	Jeff Bagwell - Winter 19
1.7	Campus over time

Score for Intro to Philoosphy - Winter 19 vs. Campus Average

B. Overall Quality of the Course, Including Materials or Content, Independent of Instructor's Teaching

Score (1-5) 1=Excellent, 2=Very Good, 3=Good, 4=Fair, 5=Poor)

1.7	Jeff Bagwell - Winter 19
1.9	Campus over time

Score for Intro to Philosophy - Winter 19 vs. Campus Average

As Sole Instructor

Introduction to Ethics (Winter 2021)

1 = Excellent (top score)

A. Overall Quality of the Instructor's Teaching

B. Overall Quality of the Course, Including Materials or Content, Independent of Instructor's Teaching
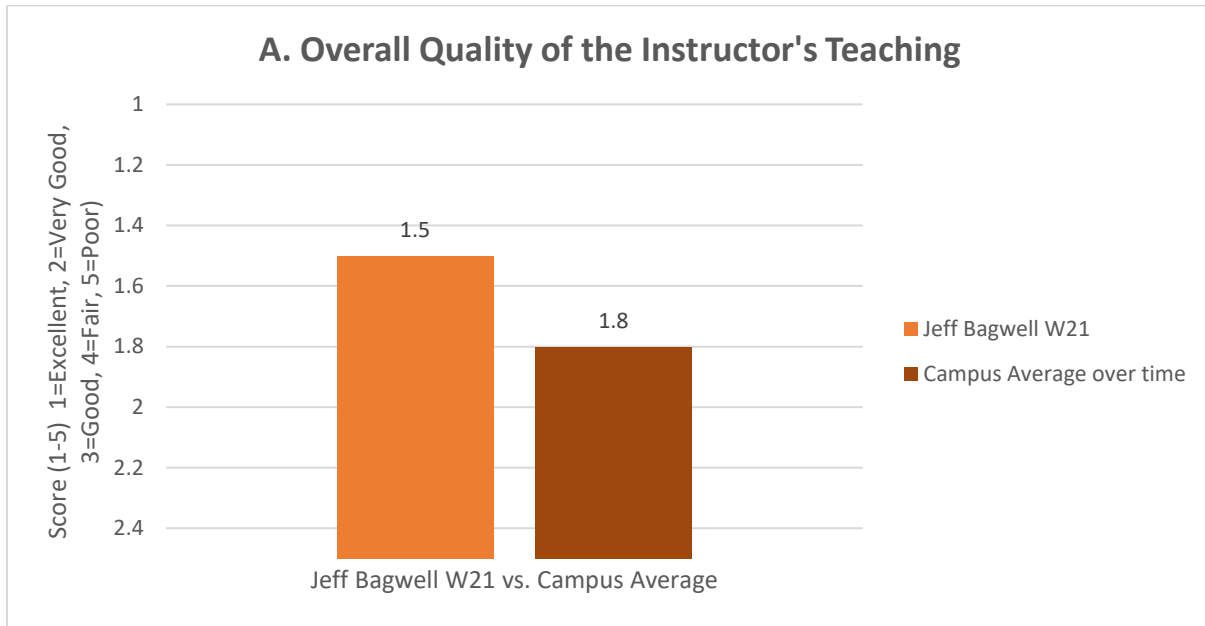
As Teaching Assistant

1 = Excellent (top score)

TA Overall Performance Over Time

Score (1-5) 1=Excellent, 2=Very Good, 3=Good, 4=Fair, 5=Poor)

1.95	F16 Critical Thinking
1.90	W17 Intro Phil
2.05	S17 Intro Ethics
1.65	SU17 Intro Ethics
1.65	F17 Intro Ancient
1.45	W18 Intro Ethics
1.50	S18 Intro Ethics
1.45	SU18 Epistemology
1.30	F18 Intro Ancient
1.45	S19 Ethics
1.65	F19 Ethics
1.55	S20 Intro Phil
1.4	F20 Intro Phil Science

—— Jeff Bagwell - Avg. of two sections   —— Campus Avg. Over Time

········· Linear (Jeff Bagwell - Avg. of two sections)

Selected Student Comments

As Sole Instructor:

"I think he is a great professor, and has patience, and cares about his students." (2019 Winter, *Intro to Philosophy*)

"Great professor. Truly cares about the subject matter, and his students." (2019 Winter, *Intro to Philosophy*)

"Your lectures were really engaging and interesting." (2019 Winter, *Intro to Philosophy*)

"I enjoyed the class quite a lot. Your enthusiasm, even when the students were kind of dead, did not go unnoticed or unappreciated. The clarity, organization, and style of lecture was excellent. Thanks for the wonderful class experience—I'll be taking more philosophy in the future!" (2019 Winter, *Intro to Philosophy*)

As Teaching Assistant:

"Jeff is a great teacher who easily simplifies problems which are often overcomplicated during lecture." (2016 Fall, *Critical Thinking*)

"Helped me gain a passion for philosophy—explained concepts in interesting ways" (2017 Winter, *Intro to Philosophy*)

"He is eager to help his students, and his enthusiasm for the subject made section enjoyable." (2017 Winter, *Intro to Philosophy*)

"This was my 1st PHIL course and he made it a great experience. I enjoyed section because he was a great teacher." (2017 Summer, *Intro to Ethics*)

"He positively affected my appreciation and understanding by very clearly fleshing out arguments in the works we studied. He did so in an enthusiastic and engaging manner." (2017 Fall, *Intro to Ancient Philosophy*)

"Jeff does a fantastic job of breaking down arguments into understandable pieces for those of us who aren't philosophy majors." (2017 Fall, *Intro to Ancient Philosophy*)

"He is always very prepared and willing to engage with students. His humor is also greatly appreciated… Jeff is so enthusiastic about the subject and makes me want to pursue other philosophy courses." (2017 Fall, *Intro to Ancient Philosophy*)

"Wonderful teacher and philosopher—very thoughtful and knowledgeable." (2017 Fall, *Intro to Ancient Philosophy*)

"He is very helpful and understands material exceptionally well. Uses feedback to guide class effectively… I don't think I would have enjoyed ethics if I was without Jeff's help because material is extremely dense." (2019 Spring, *Ethics*)

"*Jeffpardy* was one of the most entertaining lesson plans I've ever experienced. It was also very effective." (2019 Spring, *Ethics*)

"His passion is contagious. Overall, great TA." (2019 Spring, *Ethics*)

"Jeff is awesome and has great energy in class that promotes an appreciation of Philosophy" (2019 Spring, *Ethics*)

"Mr. Bagwell positively affected my appreciation AND understanding of philosophy. I had a lot of fun and learned a lot in an environment that I felt comfortable in. His office hours were always open and very helpful whenever I needed/wanted. He made this course even more fun, interesting, and thought-provoking than it already was. Very grateful to have been in his class." (2019 Fall, *Ethics*)

"This is my second time having Jeff as a TA in a philosophy class, and I was super excited he'd be leading my section. He is always enthusiastic and engaging, very patient, and very receptive to student needs/feedback… Jeff definitely positively impacted my appreciation and understanding of philosophy—he is super good at explaining difficult concepts and identifying where you are struggling." (2019 Fall, *Ethics*)

"Hilarious and personable. Truly cares about his students… His wit and creative freedom in explaining examples made philosophy fun for me (as usual)." (2019 Fall, *Ethics*)

"Overall, I think that Jeff was a great TA for this class and was always helpful whether it was in section or via email. Jeff always came to section very prepared. I enjoyed the lecture slides he made for his section that made it easy to follow. He clearly knew the material and explained it very well. I especially liked how he would help us build our papers by sharing ideas and allowing group discussion. He did a very great job explaining the structure and format of the papers, since it is different than most papers I've written before." (2020 Spring, *Intro to Philosophy*)

Sample Syllabi[2]

Introduction to Philosophy

Course Information

Instructor: Jeff Bagwell
Email: jbagwell@ucsb.edu
Course Time and Location: IV Theater, MWF 9:00-9:50 AM
Office Hours and Location: South Hall 5717, W 1:00-3:00 PM and by appointment

Teaching Assistants

40634 T 7:00 PM-7:50 PM Girvetz Hall, 2124 Jason Hanschmann jlh00@ucsb.edu
40642 W 5:00 PM-5:50 PM Girvetz Hall, 2112 Jason Collins jcollins@ucsb.edu
40659 W 6:00 PM-6:50 PM Girvetz Hall, 2108 Jason Collins jcollins@ucsb.edu
40667 M 4:00 PM-4:50 PM Phelps Hall, 1445 Jason Hanschmann jlh00@ucsb.edu
40675 M 3:00 PM-3:50 PM Girvetz Hall, 2115 Patrick Norton patricknorton@ucsb.edu
40691 M 4:00 PM-4:50 PM Girvetz Hall, 2115 Patrick Norton patricknorton@ucsb.edu

Course Description

We will examine a variety of philosophical topics including: what is the relation of God (or gods) to goodness, whether one can truly have knowledge of the external world, whether it is rational to fear death, what makes a person the same person over time, and whether it is moral to eat meat.

Texts

All required readings will be posted in PDF format or linked on the course Gauchospace; there is no need to purchase a textbook. Most of your readings will consist of primary texts of some kind: essays, dialogues, or excerpts from longer works wherein the author is presenting an original argument or explanation regarding a philosophical issue.

See below for a tentative schedule of topics and readings.

Assignments

You will write **two papers** for this course. There is no need to use outside sources when writing your papers, beyond the readings assigned for the class. If you do use outside sources, be sure to familiarize yourself with the university's plagiarism policy. If you are struggling with your writing, I encourage you to utilize Campus Learning Assistance Services: http://clas.sa.ucsb.edu/writing-esl-foreign-language

You will also take a series of Gauchospace **quizzes** and an in-class **final exam**. Both the quizzes and the final will assess your understanding of the course readings and the lecture material. This means lecture attendance is crucial to earning a good grade in the class. In addition, you will

receive a **participation** grade from your TA in your discussion section, and I will measure participation in lecture by giving a series of **iClicker** questions in each lecture.

The **final exam** for the course will be given from 8am-11am in IV Theatre (this room), on Wednesday, March 20th. The final will be cumulative, but it will draw heavily from material in the latter part of the course.

You must complete <u>both papers</u> and the <u>final exam</u> to pass the course.

Late Paper Policy

Every day that a paper is late, it will drop 3.3 percentage points. For example, if you turn in a paper two days late that would otherwise have earned 90%, it will receive 83.4%. If you do submit your paper late, it is your responsibility to inform your TA that you have turned it in late (otherwise, they may not return to the system to look for it). No papers will be accepted for credit after **3/22/19**, and no paper turned in by this deadline will drop lower than a 50% as a result of the late paper policy.

Grade Distribution

	Percentage of Grade
Lecture Attendance/Participation	**5%**
Lecture Attendance/Participation	**5%**
Online Quizzes	**10%**
Paper 1	**20%**
Paper 2	**30%**
Final Exam	**30%**

Email Correspondence

Whenever you email the instructor or the TAs, you can always expect a reply within two business days. If you send an email on a Wednesday at 3pm you can expect a reply by the following Friday at 3pm. If you send an email on a Thursday at 3pm, you can expect a reply by the following Monday at 3pm. Please don't re-send the email or request updates until this period has elapsed.

Academic Dishonesty

Every student is responsible for familiarizing him or herself with the sections of the university's "Student Conduct Code" that define general standards of conduct. It's available here: https://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/CMSMedia/Documents/CodeofConduct2012.pdf

All students are required to read the <u>Plagiarism Information Form</u>, distributed in class and available on Gauchospace.

Tentative Schedule of Topics and Readings

The list of topics won't necessarily follow a one-per-week schedule, and the topics and readings are subject to change. Please see Gauchospace for the most up-to-date schedule of readings.

Note that some of the readings are labelled "required," while others are "recommended." Required readings are those you'll be writing about, or those you'll see on quizzes/exams. Recommended readings are intended to supplement and deepen your understanding of issues raised in the required readings. (I'll sometimes reference the recommended readings in lecture, but their content will not appear on exams.)

1. What is Philosophy?
Required: "How to Read Philosophy" by David Concepcion
Recommended: "The Philosophic Enterprise" by Brand Blanshard
Recommended: "On the Study of Philosophy" by Perry, Bratman, and Fischer

2. Logic and Argumentation
Required: "Logical Toolkit" by Perry, Bratman, and Fischer

3. Philosophy of Religion
Required: Euthyphro by Plato
Recommended: "Good Minus God" by Louise M. Antony

4. Skepticism
Required: Meditations 1 & 2 by Rene Descartes
Required: Excerpt from "Proof of an External World" by G. E. Moore

5. Personal Identity
Required: Dialogue on Personal Identity by John Perry

6. Death
Required: "The Enigma of Death" by Feldman
Required: "Why is Death Bad?" by Brueckner and Fischer

7. Abortion
Required: "A Defense of Abortion" by J. J. Thomson
Required: "Why Abortion is Immoral" by D. Marquis

8. Utilitarianism
Required: Utilitarianism Ch. 1 & 2 by J. S. Mill
Recommended "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas" by Ursula Le Guin

9. Eating Animals
Required: Norcross, "Puppies, Pigs, and People."

10. Cultural Relativism
Required: "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism" by James Rachels
Recommended: "Judging Other Cultures: The Case of Genital Mutilation" by Martha Nussbaum

Student Support & Campus Resources

If you are facing a major difficulty, medical or otherwise, that is keeping you from doing well in the class, contact me or your TA as soon as possible. We are happy to work with you to find the best course of action and, if possible, to help you complete the course successfully. But we can't do that if you don't let us know about your circumstances as soon as they arise. ***Please, don't wait until after the exams to let us know about your circumstances. At that point there is virtually nothing we can do to accommodate you.***

● CAPS (Counseling & Psychological Services)

If you're dealing with depression, anxiety, or are just feeling overwhelmed, CAPS is available to help. They offer individual and group counseling, as well as relaxation rooms and other resources to make the quarter more bearable.

• (805) 893-4411   • http://counseling.sa.ucsb.edu

● CARE (Campus Advocacy Resources & Education)

CARE provides resources related to sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner violence. They offer free and confidential counseling, medical and legal assistance, and help with referrals for long-term support for those who need it.

• (805) 893-4613   • http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/care

● RCSGD (Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity)

The RCSGD provides resources for gender, sexual, romantic minorities: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, asexual, intersex, and other gender/sexual/romantic nonconforming individuals. They also collect reports of hate incidents and maintain a list of gender-neutral bathrooms on campus.

• (805) 893-5847   • http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/sgd/

● CLAS (Campus Learning Assistance Services)

CLAS offers workshops on study skills like notetaking and time management; group tutorials on math, science, and economics; assistance with essay-writing, and other free services that will help you perform well in your classes.

• http://clas.sa.ucsb.edu

● DSP (Disabled Students Program)

If you have any sort of disability--physical or mental, permanent or temporary–we strongly encourage you to register with DSP. They can then notify your instructors if you need certain accommodations during classes or during tests. A disability can be something like difficulty seeing or hearing; difficulty attending class due to physical or emotional distress; chronic anxiety or depression; or anything else that interferes with your schoolwork. There's no shame in seeking help for these sorts of things, but unfortunately UCSB requires that instructors receive confirmation from DSP before providing accommodation. Since DSP is often busy, contact them as soon as possible if you need or expect to need their support.

• (805) 893-2668   • http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu

iClicker and Attendance FAQs

Make sure to register your iClicker under your own name:

https://help.lsit.ucsb.edu/hc/en-us/articles/203324700-Students-How-do-Iregister-my-i-Clicker-on-Gauchospace

What happens if you attended but were marked as absent on Gauchospace?

- Did you forget your iClicker? If so, no credit will be given for attendance, even if you can provide evidence that you were in class.

- Is your iClicker not functioning properly? If so, no credit will be given for attendance, even if you can provide evidence that you were in class.

- Did you arrive late or leave early or step out of the room temporarily? If you miss sufficiently many iClicker questions for any of these reasons, you will be marked absent, and no credit will be given.

- Did you use an iClicker that is not registered under your name? I may be able to help you…
  - If it is unregistered, email me the ID on the back of your iClicker(s), and I will look into it.
  - If it is registered under someone else's name, email me with that person's name, and I will look into it.
  - If it is registered under someone else's name but you don't know who that person is, then I have no way to look into this even with the iClicker ID, and you will receive no credit.
  - If I am unable to find the ID and/or other name it is registered under, no credit will be given, even if you can provide evidence that you were in class.

If you need help registering your iClicker or suspect that your iClicker is not functioning properly, contact Nobu Matsuo.

> Nobu Matsuo
>
> Educational Technology Specialist
>
> 1160 Kerr Hall
>
> nobu.matsuo@id.ucsb.edu
>
> 805-893-4344

Introduction to Epistemology[3]

Course Information

Instructor: Jeff Bagwell
Email: jbagwell@ucsb.edu
Course Time and Location: TBA, MWF 9:00-9:50 AM
Office Hours and Location: South Hall 5717, W 1:00-3:00 PM and by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to core concepts and issues in contemporary epistemology. The course is divided into three sections. The first section concerns the attempt to define knowledge, beginning with a classic challenge which purports to show that knowledge must be more than just true belief with a justification. The second section concerns the challenge of global skepticism, arguments for which purport to prove that we cannot know anything about the external world. The third section concerns the nature of justification and deals with the following question: assuming that many of our beliefs are justified, what is it that makes them that way?

Our primary learning outcomes are as follows: For Unit 1, students will explain the problem Gettier raises with the traditional analysis of knowledge and explain, compare, and evaluate various ways of addressing this problem. For Unit 2, students will explain the challenge of global skepticism about the external world as presented in Descartes' Meditation I, and explain, compare, and evaluate several responses to that challenge. For Unit 3, students will explain, compare, and evaluate several attempts to specify the nature of justification.

Course Prerequisites

• One prior course in philosophy (*required*)

• PHIL 1 (Short Introduction to Philosophy) and PHIL 3 (Critical Thinking) (*recommended*)

Course Resources

• Course Reader (Sold at SB Printer in the University Center)

• Gauchospace

---

[3] This is an *abbreviated* syllabus. Much of the boilerplate about email policy, plagiarism policy, and campus resources has been removed. Please see the 'PHIL 1 – Short Introduction to Philosophy' syllabus for full details.

Course Readings

1. The Analysis of Knowledge

Plato, *Theaetetus 200d-202d* (4th Century BCE)
Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" (1963)
Clark, "Knowledge and Grounds: A Comment on Mr. Gettier's Paper" (1963)
Goldman, "A Causal Theory of Knowing" (1967)
Zagzebski, "The Inescapability of Gettier Problems" (1994)

2. Global Skepticism

Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy I* (1641)
Moore, "Proof of an External World" (1939)
Nozick, "Knowledge and Skepticism" (1981)
Stine, "Skepticism, Relevant Alternatives, and Deductive Closure" (1976)
Pryor, "The Skeptic and the Dogmatist" (2000)

3. The Nature of Justification

Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics I.3* (4th Century BCE)
Chisholm, "The Myth of the Given" (1964)
Goldman, "What is Justified Belief?" (1979)
Bonjour, "The Coherence Theory of Empirical Knowledge" (1976)
Klein, 'Human Knowledge and the Infinite Regress of Reasons" (1999)

Assignment Details

Students will be required to complete three short writing assignments on topics provided by the instructor. These assignments are designed to test comprehension, writing skills, and critical reasoning. To facilitate the learning of these skills, you will be required to submit a paper proposal for each paper prior to submitting the paper. You will receive feedback on these proposals.

Students are encouraged to discuss their writing with either the TA or the instructor. If you would like feedback on a paper draft, you should make an appointment with one of your instructors for this purpose. At least one section will be dedicated to the topic of how to write a philosophy paper.

Grading Distribution

Section Attendance:	10%	
Gauchospace Quizzes (x 5):	10%	
Paper proposal 1:	5%	(Due week 3)
Paper proposal 2:	5%	(Due week 6)
Paper 1:	20%	(Assigned week 2, due week 5)
Paper 2:	25%	(Assigned week 5, due week 8)
Take Home Final Essay Exam:	25%	(Assigned week 10)

Grading Policies:

My grading criteria for essay assignments are as follows:

> *Comprehension (45%)*
>
> *Critical Development (30%)*
>
> *Clarity, Precision, and Grammar (10%)*
>
> *Organization (10%)*
>
> *Following Instructions (5%)*

I will explain these criteria in detail when we discuss the paper assignments in lecture.

Introduction to Ethics[4]

Course Information

Instructor: Jeff Bagwell
Email: jbagwell@ucsb.edu
Course Time and Location: IV Theater, MWF 8:00-8:50 AM
Office Hours and Location: South Hall 5717, W 2:00-4:00 PM and by appointment

Course Description

In this course, we will explore three major theories in ethical thought: deontology, utilitarianism, and virtue ethics, as well as a number of issues in applied ethics. Students will read both classic and contemporary ethical texts on such issues as charity, abortion, euthanasia, animal rights, and cultural relativism.

Texts

All required readings will be posted in PDF format or linked on the course Gauchospace; there is no need to purchase a textbook. Most of your readings will consist of primary texts of some kind: essays, dialogues, or excerpts from longer works wherein the author is presenting an original argument or explanation regarding a philosophical issue.

See below for a tentative schedule of topics and readings.

Assignments

You will write **one paper** for this course. There is no need to use outside sources when writing your paper, beyond the readings assigned for the class. If you do use outside sources, be sure to familiarize yourself with the university's plagiarism policy. If you are struggling with your writing, I encourage you to utilize Campus Learning Assistance Services: http://clas.sa.ucsb.edu/writing-esl-foreign-language

You will also take a series of Gauchospace **quizzes,** an in-class **midterm exam,** and a take-home **final exam**. Both the quizzes and the final will assess your understanding of the course readings and the lecture material. This means lecture attendance is crucial to earning a good grade in the class. In addition, you will receive a **participation** grade from your TA in your discussion section, and I will measure participation in lecture by giving a series of **iClicker** questions in each lecture.

---

[4] This is an *abbreviated* syllabus. Much of the boilerplate about email policy, plagiarism policy, and campus resources has been removed. Please see the 'PHIL 1 – Short Introduction to Philosophy' syllabus for full details.

The **final exam** for the course will be a take-home final, issued on Friday, March 13th at 9 AM and due **Friday, March 20th** at 2 PM. The final will be cumulative, but it will draw heavily from material in the latter part of the course.

You must complete the <u>midterm exam</u>, <u>paper,</u> and <u>final exam</u> to pass the course.

Late Paper Policy

Every day that a paper is late, it will drop 3.3 percentage points. For example, if you turn in a paper two days late that would otherwise have earned 90%, it will receive 83.4%. If you do submit your paper late, it is your responsibility to inform your TA that you have turned it in late (otherwise, they may not return to the system to look for it). No papers will be accepted for credit after **3/20/20**, and no paper turned in by this deadline will drop lower than a 50% as a result of the late paper policy.

Attendance/Participation

Section attendance will be taken by roll call. **Lecture attendance/participation** will be measured by iClicker responses. You may not receive credit if you are not present for the entirety of the class period, and no credit will be given for malfunctioning or forgotten iClickers. See below for FAQs about absences resulting from iClicker problems.

Grade Distribution

	Percentage of Grade
Lecture Attendance/Participation	5%
Section Attendance/Participation	5%
Online Quizzes	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Paper	30%
Final Exam	30%

Tentative Schedule of Topics and Readings

The list of topics won't necessarily follow a one-per-week schedule, and the topics and readings are subject to change. Please see Gauchospace for the most up-to-date schedule of readings.

Note that some of the readings are labelled "required," while others are "optional." Required readings are those you'll be writing about, or those you'll see on quizzes/exams. Optional readings are intended to supplement and deepen your understanding of issues raised in the required readings.

1. Introduction (Week 1)

Required: "How to Read Philosophy" by Concepcion

Required: "Logical Toolkit" by Perry, Bratman, and Fisher

2. Cultural Relativism (Week 1-2)

Required: "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism" by James Rachels

Optional: "Judging Other Cultures: The Case of Genital Mutilation" by Martha Nussbaum

3. Utilitarianism (Weeks 2-3)

Required: Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality"

Required: Michael Sandel, "The Greatest Happiness Principle/Utilitarianism"

Optional: John Stuart Mill *Utilitarianism* (excerpt)

Required: "Replaceability, Career Choice, and Making a Difference" by William MacAskill

4. Kantian Deontology: (Weeks 3-4)

Required: Immanuel Kant, Selections from Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals

Required: Onora O'Neill, "Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems"

Required: Kitcher, "Human Cloning: A Kantian Approach"

5.Virtue Ethics (Weeks 5-6)

Required: Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics Book 1, Book 2

Optional: Annas, "Virtue Ethics and the Charge of Egoism"

6. Abortion (Weeks 7-8)

Required: Rosalind Hursthouse, "Virtue Theory and Abortion"

Required: "A Defense of Abortion" by J. J. Thomson

Required: "Why Abortion is Immoral" by D. Marquis

7. Euthanasia (Week 9)

Required: "Euthanasia" by Philippa Foot

Required: "A Right of Self-Termination?" by David Velleman

8. Eating Animals (Week 10)

Required: "Puppies, Pigs, and People" by Alexander Norcross

Optional: "Facing Animals" by Christine Korsgaard

Sample Assignments

Reading Response Template for Discussion Sections

Name:
Perm#:
Section:
Date:

Title of Work:
Author:

First Thoughts:

Thesis:

Striking/Puzzling Remark:

Significant Claim/Assumption:

Challenge:

Connections:

Reading Response Template for Discussion Sections (cont'd)

Instructions: At the end of section each week you will be expected to turn in a reading response on *one* of the *previous* week's required readings. You'll need to prepare these *before* each section, and have them ready to facilitate discussion. In your response you are expected to address each of the following in a couple of sentences:

1. *First Thoughts* — Did you like/dislike the piece? What did you think about the writing, the ideas? Was it clear? Was it interesting? Was it significant?
2. *Thesis* — What is the main claim for which the author is arguing and/or what is the central question the author is trying to answer?
3. *Striking/Puzzling Remark* — Identify a striking or puzzling statement, phrase, word, example, etc. Write it down and then write about it. If you're puzzled, explore your confusion. If you're intrigued, follow your curiosity. (Also: perhaps there is something odd the author *doesn't* say?)
4. *Significant Claim/Assumption* — Identify a significant claim or assumption the author makes—something that supports their thesis. How does it support the author's thesis? What evidence (if any) does the author provide to support this claim?
5. *Challenge* — What evidence might be used to challenge the above claim/assumption?
6. *Connections* — In the course of reading and thinking about the text, think of connections you made between the text and, for example, other texts you've read, films you've seen, people you've talked to, experiences you've had, etc. Explore one or more of these connections.

You are welcome to download and use the above template or to hand-write your response using the same format. Whatever you decide, you are to *bring a hard-copy* each week and to hand it in to me at the end of section.

Gauchospace Quiz for Introductory Ethics, a Revised Formative Assessment

Here is a revised multiple-choice quiz I originally used for my PHIL 4: Introduction to Ethics course during the Winter 2020 quarter. It is one of five Gauchospace quizzes that were formative assessments used to help students keep track of their own progress and comprehension in the course. The quizzes were collectively worth 10% of the students' overall course grade, so they also functioned as "easy points" buffering their scores on more challenging assignments (including a midterm, final, and essay).

The correct answer is given in boldface.

Some general comments follow each question, and there are comments following the quiz. I also give some of the Gauchospace analytics I used in my reasoning.

Welcome! QUIZ 1 consists of five multiple choice questions. You have from 9 AM on Friday, January 17th to 12 Midnight Thursday, January 23rd to complete it. There is no time limit once you have opened the quiz. You are allowed <u>three</u> attempts. You will receive feedback on each question after the quiz closes.

Question 1:

Because skepticism involves the denial of human knowledge in some domain, it is primarily a concern for which branch of philosophy?

> <u>Select one:</u>
>
> a. Ethics
>
> b. Logic
>
> c. Metaphysics
>
> **d. Epistemology**

(<u>Feedback</u>: The correct answer is e. Epistemology: the study of the origins, nature, and limits of human knowledge. See Lecture 1, slides 15-17, on the Branches of Philosophy.)

<u>Comments</u>: *This question was a good discriminator (see below) I removed an implausible distractor ("politics") because nobody was fooled among 160+ students. Also, additional distractors above 3 show little or no difference in a question's ability to discriminate (Haladnya 2002, 317-18).*

Question 2:

Consider the following argument:

> 1. All horses are cats.
>
> 2. All cats have tails.

> 3. So, all horses have tails.

 Which one of the following is true of this argument?

Select one:

- **a.** **The argument is valid.**
- **b.** The argument is sound.
- **c.** The argument is false.

(Feedback: The correct answer is a. The argument is valid. The conclusion follows from the premises. It isn't sound because this requires all the premises to be true, and premise 1 is false. The argument is not false because only declarative sentences, propositions, or beliefs can be false. Whole arguments can be valid or invalid, sound or unsound. Please see Week 1, Lectures 2-3 on Logical Basics)

Comments: This question was originally too easy (see below under "Discrimination."). It used to have these options:

> ***a. It is not sound.***
>
> *b. Premise one is true.*
>
> *c. It is not valid.*
>
> *d. The conclusion is false.*

To make it more challenging, I've eliminated the two ineffective distractors and added a more plausible one. To make it clearer, I've phrased all responses in the positive.

Question 3

According to James Rachels, there are several bad consequences of accepting Cultural Relativism. Which one of these is NOT a bad consequence of accepting Cultural Relativism?

Select one:

a. We can't judge actions right and wrong within our own culture.

b. We can't make sense of progress in a culture, such as the abolition of slavery.

c. We can't judge troubling practices of other cultures such as Female Genital Mutilation.

d. We can't criticize or change our own culture's moral code, even if it seems wrong.

(Feedback: The correct answer is a. If we accept Cultural Relativism, we can still judge actions right or wrong within our own culture, by referring to its moral code. What we cannot do is make sense of moral progress (b.), judge troubling practices of other cultures (c.), or criticize our own culture's moral code (d.). Please see

Week 2, Lecture 4 on James Rachels' "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism," slides 27-29. See also Rachels p. 17-18.)

Comments: Following the guidelines of Haladnya (2002), I am using negative stems sparingly, and emphasizing the negative word by putting it in all caps. I've also simplified the language in the prompt as well as the choices. I've made the choices more similar in length and grammatically parallel, eliminating any clues.

Question 4:

According to Peter Singer's argument, under which one of these conditions is it permissible to NOT give your money to charity?

Select one:

a. By giving the money to charity, you would fail to prevent some greater harm elsewhere.

b. By giving the money to charity, you would fail to increase your own pleasure slightly because you won't be able to purchase that new home entertainment system.

c. You are not obligated to give, because there are other people who are also in a good financial position to help by donating to the same charity.

d. By giving the money to charity, you would cause yourself some minor discomfort because you won't be able to continue paying a maid to clean your house.

e. You are not obligated to give, because the victims you would be helping are far away from you--say, in sub-Saharan Africa or India.

(Feedback: The correct answer is a., because you would be justified only if by giving money to charity you would fail to prevent some greater harm elsewhere. To see why these other excuses don't hold water for Singer, please see Lectures 5-6 on Singer's "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," and pp. 232-240 in that essay.)

Comments: This question was my star—my best discriminator—so I'm making only small changes. See comment about question 3. I am keeping the negative in the stem and putting it in all capital letters. I've streamlined the language and made the choices more grammatically parallel and similar in length.

Question 5:

Assuming it is morally required to give 10% of your money to those in need every time you see them, how would you evaluate the actions of Bob, Gloria, and Jane in the scenario where each of them sees a very poor person living in the street who asks them for money?

Here's what each person does:

Bob has $200 in his pockets, and gives the poor person $10.

Gloria has $100 in her pockets, and gives the poor person $50.

Jane has $300 in her pockets, and gives the poor person $30.

Match the following actions on the left to the correct moral evaluations on the right:

Bob's action	Obligatory
Gloria's action	Impermissible
Jane's action	Supererogatory

(Feedback: The correct answers are: Bob's action is impermissible, because he is not giving the poor person what is morally required; Gloria's action is supererogatory, because she was going "above and beyond the call of moral duty" by giving so much; and Jane's action was obligatory, because she was doing what was morally required by giving 10%. Please see Week 2, Lecture 2 slides 3-5 on Moral Categories for Actions.)

Comments: The original version of this question was my worst discriminator, and it had three very implausible distractors that nobody bought. I've decided to try a matching question instead of a conventional multiple choice here. It's a reliable format, and it introduces some variety (Haldanya 324).

Open-Ended Questions (ungraded)

6. What was your reaction to your performance on the quiz?

7. What aspect of lecture most helped your comprehension of the material?

Comments: These two open-ended questions are new. They encourage metacognitive reflection on the student's study habits and experiences, as well as how they interact with lectures. The second question also gives me some feedback about what works in my lectures.

General comments:

- The responses are randomized, so don't worry that many of the correct responses are 'a'.
- I've added feedback to each of the questions, which will appear in the quiz after it's closed. This includes an explanation of the correct answer and references back to specific locations in the course materials.
- Formative assessments are supposed to feed back into the course and allow me and the students to adjust what we are doing to promote improved learning. But these quizzes probably didn't do much more than function as an easy grade for most, with a few students potentially frustrated by a missed question and without much guidance about where to go next.
- To serve the "helping, not punishing" rationale, I will allow multiple attempts an all of these quizzes. These should be low-pressure self-testing experiences.
- I will provide, for each question, a brief description of why the correct answer is correct (time permitting, possibly also why each of the most plausible distractors is *incorrect*), along with a reference back to the text and lecture where the concept was discussed.
  - Based on an incorrect answer, give the student a task: re-read X, review your notes on X, bring X up to me or to your TA in section.

A note on Gauchospace Statistics:

Using the built-in statistics in Gauchospace, I've gathered stats on which distractors worked well or fell flat. I also have info on which questions were better discriminators.

Discrimination:

	Discrimination index	Discriminative efficiency
Question 1	37.01%	56.69%
Question 2	18.54%	26.68%
Question 3	35.37%	43.63%
Question 4	41.15%	57.00%
Question 5	12.50%	32.28%

From the Gauchospace page on interpreting statistics:

https://docs.moodle.org/dev/Quiz_report_statistics

***Discrimination index*:** This is the correlation between the weighted scores on the question and those on the rest of the test. It indicates how effective the question is at sorting out able students from those who are less able. The results should be interpreted as follows

Index	Interpretation
50 and above	Very good discrimination
30 – 50	Adequate discrimination
20 - 29	Weak discrimination
0 - 19	Very weak discrimination
-ve	Question probably invalid

***Discrimination efficiency*:** This statistic attempts to estimate how good the discrimination index is relative to the difficulty of the question.

An item which is very easy or very difficult cannot discriminate between students of different ability, because most of them get the same score on that question. Maximum discrimination requires a facility index in the range 30% - 70% (although such a value is no guarantee of a high discrimination index).

The discrimination efficiency will very rarely approach 100%, but values in excess of 50% should be achievable. Lower values indicate that the question is not nearly as effective at discriminating between students of different ability as it might be and therefore is not a particularly good question.

Sources Cited:

Haladnya, Thomas M., Steven M. Downing, and Michael C. Rodriguez (2002), "A Review of Multiple-Choice Item-Writing Guidelines for Classroom Assessment," *APPLIED MEASUREMENT IN EDUCATION*, 15(3), 309–334.