I. Introduction
The primary concern of philosophy is the study of ideas central to the ways we think and live. The value, however, of many of our key concepts is often hidden from us. We come to take the ways we make sense of ourselves and the world around us for granted. We forget why truth matters or acting decently is a minimal requirement for treating others justly.

Readings are drawn from the writings of major philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Anselm, Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Leibniz, Kant, John Stuart Mill, and Bertrand Russell, as well as prominent contemporary philosophers such as Peter Singer, John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Daniel Dennett, Martha Nussbaum, John Searle, Bernard Williams, Judith Thomson, Hilary Putnam and Tom Nagel.

The focus of the course is on the questions: “Can Machines Think?” • “Do Persons have Free Will?” • “How do you Know you are not a Brain-in-a-Vat or Living in a Matrix?” • “What is Justice?” • “Why be Good?” • “What’s so Bad about Inequality?” • “If you had the Choice, would you Live Forever?” • Does Time Flow?” • “Does Life have Meaning?”

The course is more about thinking than it is about coverage or the memorization of a bunch of facts. In its aim and format the course is more an invitation to do philosophy than an introduction. Introductions seek to map out a territory or lay the ground for more detailed study. There will be some of that here, but insofar as invitations beckon and introductions point, the course beckons students to the study of philosophy rather than points the way.
It is not intended to be comprehensive and exhaustive. The classic philosophy is selected to provide a basis for understanding ongoing debates within the field. It is divided into four sections and each section focuses on a key area within Western philosophy:

- **Preamble:** What is Thinking?
- **PART I:** REASON & FAITH
- **PART II:** MIND & BODY
- **PART III:** KNOWLEDGE & REALITY
- **PART IV:** ETHICS, JUSTICE & THE GOOD LIFE

The course cultivates habits of heart and mind that help us become clearer about what matters to us most. As Robert Rubin, Treasury Secretary under Clinton, repeatedly insisted: “I took one course in philosophy in college and it made me a better economist.”

The Syllabus for the Introduction to Philosophy course (taught by Andreas Teuber) has been listed as the second most popular philosophy syllabi in the world by Google and the Digital Library of America for more than a decade.

**“The Ten Most Popular Philosophy Syllabi in the World”**
http://www.dancohen.org/blog/posts/10_most_popular_philosophy_syllabi

II. Class Times
The course will meet on **Tuesdays & Fridays from 9:30 to 10:50 PM.**

III. Course Requirements and Reading

Course Requirements will remain more or less the same as in prior years. Professor Teuber has been teaching the course at Harvard University in the Summer and at Brandeis in the Fall for thirteen years. In the Fall of 2018 at Brandeis, it will follow the same trajectory as it did last year and draw on many of the same readings.

There is no reading you have to buy for the course. All readings: essays and selections from books will be posted online on the COURSE LATTE WEB SITE. You will not be required to purchase a textbook or a course pak, but the Norton Introduction to Philosophy (2015) has most of the course readings between its two covers and Tom Nagel’s WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN? A Very Short Introduction to Philosophy are strongly recommended.
IV. Writing
Four short papers are required on topics growing out of the readings and class discussions. The short papers should be no more than 5 to 6 pages in length. Paper topics will be available seven (7) to ten (10) days before a paper is due as well as publicly shared on the web to allow everyone in the class to show the question, if they wish, to friends and family and argue with them about it. The first of the four papers will not be graded. It will be a credit/no credit writing exercise. What a credit/no credit exercise is will be explained on the first day of class. There will also be three “take home” Reader Response Exercises which will require no more than a paragraph or two.

V. Rewriting
You will have the opportunity to rewrite one, perhaps two, of the three graded papers. Rewrites must be accompanied by a copy of the original paper with the comments, plus a cover sheet, stating how you have improved the paper and spelling out what you did to make your paper, now rewritten, that much more wonderful. The grade you receive on your rewrite will be the grade you will receive for the paper. It will not be an average of the two grades. More will be said about rewriting on the first day of class and at the time the rewrite option kicks in.

VI. Examinations
There will be NO FINAL EXAM or MID-TERM. There will be an in-class quiz on the reading near the end of the Fall Semester. The quiz should take about twenty minutes. Quiz questions will be True + False and Multiple Choice and you can guess. Other than the quiz there will be no examinations of any kind.
VII. Participation
You may meet the participation requirement by participating in class discussions, attending discussion sessions, talking and corresponding with family and friends as well as classmates, by keeping a diary or journal, by communicating on Facebook. At the end of the semester everyone will be given the opportunity to send an email describing what they did in and outside the class to meet the requirements.

VIII. Attendance
The attendance policy is currently under review. The policy will be announced.

IX. Grading
Assuming that everyone receives “credit” on the first paper, the three remaining graded papers will be weighted as follows: 35% for your best effort, 25% for your next best effort and 20% for the one which is least successful of the three. The three reader response exercises will count 10% and the quiz and participation will each count 5% of the final grade.
X. Teaching Assistants
Several teaching assistants have been assigned to the course. The teaching assistants will be primarily responsible for reading your papers and making comments on them as well as participating in and helping to lead discussion sessions. The teaching assistants will also be available to discuss your ideas for how you wish to address this or that paper topic. I shall read all the papers before grades are handed out and independently decide what grade each paper should receive. If you are convinced an error has been made, first talk with your teaching assistant with whom you have been working. If you are still not satisfied, you may bring your paper to me.

XI. Office Hours
I will hold office hours (RABB 306) on Fridays from 11:00 until 12:00 and by appointment. If you wish to leave messages for me, send me an email at teuber@g.harvard.edu or teuber@brandeis.edu. The Teaching Assistants will also hold office hours and be reachable by email. Their hours will be announced in the first week of the Fall semester.

XII. Academic Integrity
Brandeis expects you to understand and maintain high standards of academic integrity. Breaches of academic integrity are subject to review and disciplinary action by the Administrative Board. Examples include plagiarism, inappropriate collaboration, cheating, duplication of assignments and falsification and misrepresentation of research results. See the Brandeis Policies page at http://www.brandeis.edu/svpse/academicintegrity/

XIII. Resources to Support Academic Integrity
Harvard offers essential information about the use of sources in academic writing.

Guide to Using Resources
http://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do

XIV. Accessibility and Accommodation Services
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately. Academic Services at http://www.brandeis.edu/acserv/disabilities/ offers a variety of accommodations and services to students with documented disabilities, permanent and temporary injuries, and chronic conditions.
XV. Credit Hours
This is a four credit course that meets three hours per week. Students are expected to spend nine or more hours per week in prep for class, in reading, writing, and discussion.

XVII Learning Goals

Philosophy helps one to think better, think smarter.

It develops skills such as sound reasoning, an enlightened use of one's imagination, the capacity to analyze controversial issues, to entertain points of view contrary to one's own, to put oneself in someone else’s shoes and see the world from their point of view, to reflect critically on a wide range of human activities and endeavors, skills that are invaluable in the mastery of any discipline and in the pursuit of every vocation.

It should not be surprising to hear Robert Rubin, Treasury Secretary under Clinton, say “I took just one philosophy course as an undergraduate in college and it made me a better economist.”
I don't believe in ethics any more.

As far as I'm concerned, the ends justify the means.

Get what you can while the getting's good—that's what I say! Might makes right? The winners write the history books!

It's a dog-eat-dog world, so I'll do whatever I have to, and let others argue about whether it's "right" or not.

Hey!

Why'd you do that?? You were in my way. Now you're not. The ends justify the means.

I didn't mean for everyone, you fool. Just me!

Ahh...