PI 230: Indigenous Philosophy
Course Syllabus

Section Information
Section 01
Course Delivery Mode Face-to-Face

Instructor Information
Dr. Brett A. Fulkerson-Smith
HSS 120F
Email: fulkerson-smithb@triton.uog.edu
Office Phone Number: (671) 735-2816
Office Hours: Monday: 8:30-9:30 AM; 12:30-1:30 PM
 Tuesday: 9:00-11:00 AM
 Wednesday: 8:30-9:30 AM; 12:30-1:30 PM

 Consultations during office hours are offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Students may wish to reserve one or more time slots (depending on the nature of the meeting) at ███████████████████████

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This course offers a close look at various "indigenous" intellectual traditions, which may include CHamoru and Micronesian, Melanesian, Hawaiian, Maori, north American first nations, Inuit, Aztec, Polynesian, Sami, Okinawan and Ainu philosophies. We will engage with different perspectives, worldviews, with an aim to appreciating the contributions indigenous philosophies can make a universal human questions about the nature of human beings, the world, and our place in it, as well as to debates about concrete issues, such as health care and environmental protection.

COURSE CONTENT

This course discusses "indigenous" philosophical ideas. There is a particular focus on Pacific philosophies, including Guam and Micronesia, though the course does not exclusively focus on the Pacific.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ALIGNMENT MATRIX

UNIVERSITY OF
GUAM
UNIBETSEDÅT GUAHAN

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Philosophy Program

FANUCHÅNAN 2024

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)	Program (PLO)	Institutional (ILO)
Justify positions in indigenous philosophy in a rigorous way	(A) Justify positions with reasoned argument in a rigorous way	Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving
Express indigenous philosophical perspectives orally and in writing precisely and clearly	(B) Express themselves orally and in writing precisely and clearly	Effective oral and written communication
Understand and engage with indigenous philosophical perspectives different to their own	(C) Understand and engage with perspectives different to their own	Understanding and appreciation of culturally diverse people, ideas, and values in a democratic context
Analyze real-world problems using indigenous philosophical tools	(D) Analyze real-world problems using philosophical tools	Responsible use of knowledge, natural resources, and technology
Reconstruct the positions of indigenous philosophers through the close reading of texts	(E) Reconstruct the positions of authors through the close reading of texts	An appreciation of the arts and sciences
Practice philosophical virtues while discussing indigenous philosophy	(F) Practice philosophical virtues in their interactions with others	An interest in personal development and lifelong learning

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED TEXTS

Connolly, Tim. *Doing Philosophy Comparatively: Foundations, Problems, and Methods of Cross-Cultural Inquiry*. An electronic copy of this text is available free of charge on Moodle.

Dobbin, Jay, and Francis X. Hezel. *Summoning the Powers Beyond: Traditional Religions in Micronesia*. An electronic copy of this text is available free of charge on Moodle.

Stewart, Georgina. *Māori Philosophy: Indigenous Thinking from Aotearoa*. An electronic copy of this text is available free of charge on Moodle.

Sullivan-Clarke, Andrea. *Ways of Being in the World: An Introduction to Indigenous Philosophies of Turtle Island*. An electronic copy of this text is available free of charge on Moodle.

Jeffers, Chike. *Listening to Ourselves: A Multilingual Anthology of African Philosophy*. An electronic copy of this text is available free of charge on Moodle.

Any additional course readings will be made available by the instructor free of charge on Moodle.

STUDENT SUPPORT:

The following is a list of resources that students can turn to when they need support:

- Problems with the course instructions or other content?
  Contact your Instructor for clarification and assistance.
- Technical problems with UOG Moodle system?
  Contact the UOG Moodle Help team by email at moodlehelp@triton.uog.edu or by phone at (671) 735-2620.
- Problems with WebAdvisor or GoTritons student email service?
  Contact the UOG Office of Information Technology (aka: the Computer Center) by email at helpdesk@uog.edu or by phone at (671) 735-2640.
- UOG Library Resources and Services
  Go online to https://www.uog.edu/student-services/rfk-library/
- UOG Student Services
  Go online to https://www.uog.edu/student-services/enrollment-management-student-success/ to contact the Admissions and Records office, Financial Aid office, Student Life office, Housing and Residence, Counseling, Student Health, and other services.

In addition:

Office hours and outside appointments. There's only so much that you as a student can get out of the direct instruction and conversation that takes place during classes. At a small university like ours, office hours are a highly important extension of the classroom.

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GRADING INFORMATION

COURSE FINAL GRADES

A+   97-100%

A   93-96%

A-   90-92%

B+   87-89%

B   83-86%

B-   80-82%

C+   76-79%

C   70-75%

D   60-69%

F   ≤59%

NC   No Credit. *Note: This Course Grade must be stated in the approved Course Catalog Description.*

UW: Unofficial withdrawal assigned by Registrar. Student stopped attending classes and did not submit required documents to the Admissions & Records office.

W: Withdrawal assigned by Registrar. Student stopped attending classes and submitted required documents to the Admissions & Records office.

ASSIGNMENTS AND PERCENTAGES

Attendance	10%
Writing Assignments	10%
Presentation of Readings	20%
Portfolio & Developmental Memo	60%

Attendance & Active Participation (10% of final course grade): Most of our class time will be devoted to discussion and other forms of active learning. Attendance and participation are therefore required for you to get the most out of this course. Some people are more comfortable than others in speaking up in class, but if you have always been shy about speaking up, a course like this is a good opportunity to become more comfortable with it.

Writing Assignments (10% of final course grade): Students in this course will practice three forms of philosophical writing:

1. **Interpretation and Analysis**. Students should be able to analyze, interpret, and understand philosophical texts and discourse.

Success in achieving this goal will be assessed by a student's ability to:
- identify and describe the main aim(s) of a text or thinker
- identify and describe the strategy of a text or thinker.
- identify and describe the main assumption(s) of a text or thinker.
- recognize what is important about or "at stake in" a philosophical debate.
- separate understanding a text from evaluating a text.
- summarize and explicate the main support for the main conclusion(s).
- pick out key terms for analysis.
- identify incomplete, ambiguous, vague, or nonsensical concepts and statements.
- ask incisive questions of a thinker/text.
- apply the principle of charity in interpretation.

2. **Argumentation**. Students should be able to effectively identify, evaluate, and formulate arguments.

   2a. Success in achieving the goal of _evaluating arguments_ will be assessed by a student's ability to:
   - identify arguments in the wild.
   - define and identify formal and informal fallacies in a found argument.
   - employ elementary logic to evaluate an argument.
   - formulate a strong objection to a given argument.

   2b. Success in achieving the goal of _formulating arguments_ will be assessed by a student's ability to:
   - employ elementary logic to formulate an argument.
   - avoid formal and informal fallacies in making an argument.
   - formulate an effective and well-reasoned argument for and against a position.

3. **Philosophical Knowledge and Methodology**. Students should be able to demonstrate a high degree of fluency with the major traditions, figures, concepts, and methods of philosophy.

   Success in achieving this goal will be assessed by a student's ability to:
   - describe contextual setting and use(s) (political or otherwise) of the philosophical claims, positions, or theories.
   - describe the important similarities and differences between philosophical claims, positions, or theories.
   - evaluate the truth and value of philosophical claims, positions, or theories within a comparative perspective using criteria like empirical accuracy,

external coherence, practical usefulness, internal consistency, theoretical simplicity, explanatory scope, or personal experience.

These writing assignments will be about readings found in *A Sourcebook in Asian Philosophy*; that is, writing assignments will be about texts that the Asian philosophical traditions themselves have regarded as fundamental. Students can select which kind of writing to do for each reading. But they must ensure that, by the end of the semester, they have examples of strong writing in each of the three categories above. During the early part of the semester, I will provide examples of each kind of writing, and students will practice each kind of writing on a common, familiar reading.

Writing assignments will be graded on a 4-point scale with commentary:

0 = the assignment was not turned in on time; **there are no extensions in this course or opportunities to make-up missed work.**
1 = the assignment was completed and submitted on time, but has *many* issues regarding form or content.
2 = the assignment was completed and submitted on time, and has *few* issues regarding form or content.
3 = the assignment was completed and submitted on time, and has *no* issues regarding form or content.

As regards form, writing assignments will be assessed in light of the following:

- discuss philosophy in a thoughtful and engaging manner.
- show respect for others and their ideas (express disagreement in a respectful and rational manner).
- plan a paper strategically.
- structure a paper given the strategy.
- choose the most appropriate and precise wording.
- stick to the point.

Each student will receive three (3) **virtual tokens** at the beginning of the semester; I will keep an official log in Moodle. These tokens can be used to revise and resubmit work. Tokens may not be used to complete a missed assignment. Revised work will be re-graded and will receive additional commentary. Students must make it clear on which writing assignment(s) they wish to use a virtual token.

Student Presentations of Course Readings (20% of final course grade): Each student will be responsible for presenting one or more course readings throughout the semester. These presentations are designed to summarize the assigned reading and to set the stage for a class

discussion, which the instructor will then facilitate. The presentations should help peers grasp the essential arguments, concepts, and questions within the readings. Presenters should:

- Provide a clear and concise summary of the key points, arguments, and themes of the reading. Focus on the most important aspects that will aid in understanding the material.
- Offer a brief analysis of the reading. Highlight strengths, weaknesses, connections to other course materials, and any controversial or thought-provoking points. This should not simply be a review but should offer insights that could guide the class discussion.
- Prepare 2-3 open-ended questions related to the reading. These questions should be designed to provoke critical thinking and discussion among your classmates. The questions should be thought-provoking and connect the reading to broader course themes.
- Present their summary and analysis clearly and engagingly. Aim for a presentation that is 10-15 minutes long. Visual aids are encouraged but not required.
- Actively listen during the subsequent discussion facilitated by the instructor and be prepared to contribute additional insights or clarify points as needed.

Showcase Portfolio & Developmental Memo (60% of final course grade): At the end of the semester, students will select and curate their best writing that exemplifies each kind of writing. Students can submit up to four writing samples. Writing samples must be clean and unmarked. Writing samples can be revisions of previous work, including writing on which you used virtual tokens or writing that you took the initiative to revise independently. In addition to commentaries on original submissions, I am happy to spend time discussing student writing and providing examples and practical advice during my office hours; I will not *not* pre-grade writing assignments. That is to say, I will not "look over" any writing samples that you are thinking of including in the showcase portfolio. Use your best judgement and take pride in your accomplishments over the semester!

Students must also affix a reflection memo to the front of their portfolio. This memo will include an opportunity students to reflect on their development as writers and thinkers, and not merely on the quality of their products.

The portfolio will be given a portfolio grade based on my blind (re-)assessment of the submitted samples in light of their form and content; see criteria above. The assessment of writing samples counts for 40% of the component grade. The developmental memo counts for 20% of the component grade.

Course, Program, and University Policies and Other Information

Academic Misconduct—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect,

fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UOG community, students accept the expectations of the Student Code of Conduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the Student Code of Conduct Policy in the Student Handbook. (http://www.uog.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook_10.7.16.pdf) For this class, any plagiarism will be evaluated by incident. All incidents, at minimum, will automatically receive a failing grade for the assignment. If an incident of plagiarism occurs more than once in the same course, the student may receive a failing grade for the class.

Copyright—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. **The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community free of all forms of discrimination and harassment in all programs, activities and employment practices as required by Title VII and Title IX and other applicable statutes and policies. If you experience harassment or discrimination, report it immediately to the Director of EEO/ADA & TITLE IX Office, at 671-735-2244, 671-735-2971, TOD 671-735-2243 or eeo-ada@trlton.uog.edu. For immediate assistance in an emergency call 911.

For individuals covered under the ADA {Americans with Disabilities Act), if you are a student with a disability requiring academic accommodation{s), please contact the Student Counseling and Advising Service Accommodations Office to discuss your confidential request. Please provide an accommodation letter from the Disability Support Services/Student Counseling and Advising Service Accommodation counselor. To register for academic accommodations, please contact or visit the Student Center, Rotunda office #6, disabilitvsupport@triton.uog.edu or telephone/(TOD) 671-735-2460.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) — The goal of teaching is to impart a process of gathering, understanding, and synthesizing relevant information, inclusive of critical thinking and project details. Language Learning Models (LLMs) essentially eliminate the need for developing technical writing skills, as they can produce polished prose consistently. This technology is likened to word processors that have made handwriting redundant. LLMs efficiently gather and present information, making the task of accumulating and presenting routine information redundant as well. *With the advent of LLMs, then, a well-informed, competently written piece of prose is now a baseline expectation rather than a goal.* This shifts the question to what value-add teachers and students can bring beyond what an AI model can

generate in seconds, potentially requiring a rethinking of teaching approaches and pedagogical institutions. Like other labor-saving devices, LLMs allow us to shift our focus to areas that cannot be mechanized, raising the bar for what constitutes acceptable performance.

There are several implications. This shift could potentially increase the focus on critical thinking, creativity, and innovation, as the basics of information gathering and writing are covered by LLMs. Pedagogical methods may need to evolve to accommodate this new reality. Teachers might need to redesign curricula and assessments to emphasize the skills that LLMs can't replicate. The definition of student success and accomplishment could be revised to reflect these changes. It might help level the playing field for students with varying writing abilities, as everyone would have access to the same standard of written work through LLMs, allowing them to focus more on content and critical thinking. On a broader level, this development could reshape the landscape of education, leading to increased emphasis on developing soft skills like problem-solving, creativity, and emotional intelligence.

But, there are also worries. Some might suggest that the students themselves are not producing the smoothly written, well informed text. Or that there's no evidence of learning in work created through the use of LLMs. Finally, some might believe that students working at a C level will be demotivated by AI working at a B or A level.

It is true that Language Learning Models (LLMs) may generate the polished prose, but this doesn't negate the value of the learning process. The role of students in this new paradigm shifts from being just scribes to becoming editors, synthesizers, and critical thinkers. They would need to direct the AI, verify its outputs, integrate diverse pieces of information, and ensure that the final product aligns with the task at hand. These are high-level cognitive tasks that contribute significantly to their learning.

The evidence of learning might not be as direct as in traditional assignments, but it is still present. The LLM-generated output will still be guided and refined by students. They will have to engage with the topic at a deep level to guide the model effectively. Evaluating the quality, relevance, and accuracy of the information produced will require understanding the topic. It's a shift from assessing learning based on writing ability to assessing learning based on understanding, critical thinking, and the ability to synthesize and guide an AI to produce quality content.

It's understandable that students may feel demotivated when an AI tool can easily produce work that surpasses theirs. However, this is where it's crucial to redefine success and progress in the classroom. Rather than judging students solely based on the final product, educators can shift towards a model that values the learning process itself. This involves reinforcing the idea that these tools are just that – tools, meant to assist in the learning journey, not replace it. Education must pivot towards fostering skills that AI cannot replicate – empathy, creativity,

critical thinking, ethical reasoning, etc. Students should understand that their unique human qualities, ideas, and perspectives hold immense value, and they are not in competition with AI, but instead, learning to leverage it as a resource.

For these reasons, AI Writing tools such as ChatGPT are welcome in this class, provided that you cite when and how you use the tool (see below) or submit a transcript of your interaction with AI.

Here is an example of **Example of attribution language:**

"The author generated this text in part with GPT-3, OpenAI's large-scale language-generation model. Upon generating draft language, the author reviewed, edited, and revised the language to their own liking and takes ultimate responsibility for the content of this publication."

Copyright—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. **The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community free of all forms of discrimination and harassment in all programs, activities and employment practices as required by Title VII and Title IX and other applicable statutes and policies. If you experience harassment or discrimination, report it immediately to the Director of EEO/ADA & TITLE IX Office, at 671-735-2244, 671-735-2971, TOD 671-735-2243 or eeo-ada@trlton.uog.edu. For immediate assistance in an emergency call 911.

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Class Schedule

Unit		Dates
Unit 1: On Going Comparative Philosophy		August 20-September 5
Unit 2: On Micronesian Philosophy		September 10-September 26
Unit 3: On Māori Philosophy		October 1-October 24
Unit 4: On Indigenous Philosophies of Turtle Island		October 29-November 14
Unit 5: On African Philosophy		November 19-December 5

August

2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
			1	2	3/4
5	6	7	8	9	10/11
12	13	14 Semester Begins	15 Course Introduction	16	17/18
19	20 Conolly, Chapter 1	21	22 Conolly, Chapter 2	23	24/25
26	27 Conolly, Chapter 3	28	29 Conolly, Chapter 4	30	31

September
2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
					/1
2 Labor Day: No Classes	3 Conolly, Chapter 5	4	5 Conolly, Chapter 6	6	7/8
9	10 Dobbin, Chapter 3	11	12 Dobbin, Chapter 3 Cont	13	14/15
16	17 Dobbin, Chapter 7	18	19 Dobbin, Chapter 8	20	21/22
23	24 Dobbin, Chapter 10	25	26 Flex Day	27	28/29
30					

October 2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
	1 Stewart, Chapter 3	2	3 Stewart, Chapter 4	4	5/6
7 Fanuchånan Break (No Classes)	8 Fanuchånan Break (No Classes)	9 Fanuchånan Break (No Classes)	10 Fanuchånan Break (No Classes)	11 Fanuchånan Break (No Classes)	12/13
14	15 Stewart, Chapter 5	16	17 Stewart, Chapter 6 & Infinitely Welcome	18	19/20
21	22 Stewart, Chapter 6 & Mana Wahine and Washday at the Pā	23	24 Stewart, Chapter 1 Fulkerson-Smith	25	26/27
28	29 Sullivan-Clarke, Part II	30	31 Sullivan-Clarke, Part II Cont		

November 2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
				1	2/3
4	5 Sullivan-Clarke, Part III	6	7 Sullivan-Clarke, Part III Cont	8	9/10
11 Veterans' Day (Observed)	12 Sullivan-Clarke, Part IV	13	14 Sullivan-Clarke, Part IV Cont	15	16/17
18	19 Jeffers, The Ethiopian Conception of Time and Modernity	20	21 Jeffers, A Proverb Never Lies	22	23/24
25	26 Jeffers, What's in a Name?	27	28 Thanksgiving Break (No Classes)	29 Thanksgiving Break (No Classes)	30

December

2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
					/1
2	3 Jeffers, Women, Children, Goats, and Land	4	5 Jeffers, Good and Evil	6 Semester Ends	7/8
9 Our Lady of Camarin Day (Observed)	10 Final Exams	11 Final Exams	12 Final Exams	13 End of Semester	14/15
16	17	18	19	20	21/22
23	24	25	26	27	28/29
30	31				