

**J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College  
Course Content Summary**

**Course Prefix and Number:** PHI 101

**Credits:** 3

**Course Title:** Introduction to Philosophy I

**Course Description:** Introduces a broad spectrum of philosophical problems and perspectives with an emphasis on the systematic questioning of basic assumptions about meaning, knowledge, reality, and values. Part I of II. Prerequisite: Placement in ENG 111 or placement in co-requisites ENG 111 and EDE 11. Lecture 3 hours per week.

**General Course Purpose:** To fulfill a humanities/fine arts elective, or provide information to anyone interested in learning about philosophy.

**Course Prerequisites and Co-requisites:**

Prerequisite: Placement in ENG 111 or placement in co-requisites ENG 111 and EDE 11

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completing the course, the student will be able to

- a. Identify the influences of Greek rational thought in the development of Western thinking;
- b. Identify features of Cartesian thinking in Western thought;
- c. Apply Wittgenstein's methods of analysis to determine the distinction between metaphysical belief and knowledge;
- d. Identify characteristics of existential philosophy that are important in today's thinking; and
- e. Distinguish the features of Buddhist thinking from the traditional Western mindset.

**Major Topics to Be Included:**

- a. Ancient Greek Idealism: Socrates, Plato, Pre-Socratics, and Aristotle
- b. Nature of metaphysics and traditional metaphysical problem
- c. Limits and nature of language
- d. Empiricism, rationalism, and pragmatism
- e. Introduction to existential thought
- f. Ordinary language school of thought
- g. Cartesian dualism—mind/body problem
- h. Contrasts with Buddhism

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