

Module Template:

1. Description of the course

PHI 215, Philosophical Issues. This course introduces fundamental issues in philosophy considering the views of classical and contemporary philosophers. Emphasis is placed on knowledge and belief, appearance and reality, determinism and free will, faith and reason, and justice and inequality. Upon completion, students should be able to identify, analyze, and critically evaluate the philosophical components of an issue.

2. Description of the Module

This Global module will focus specifically on Islamic philosophical tradition. Students will learn in brief about the history of Islamic philosophy, from the formative period of Al Kindi to Ibn Rushd and the impact this tradition had on Europe and the development of the western philosophical tradition. With this brief introduction to the history, various Islamic Philosophers will be examined across the topics of the course. Later thinkers, such as Mulla Sadra will also be introduced. This module is designed to provide a brief overview of history, and a more in-depth look to Islamic responses to the same questions faced in what is traditionally understood as Western Philosophy. As such, the activities can be done as part of a unified module, or they can be broken up and added to the course when each philosophical topic is covered.

3. Global Learning Outcomes

1. Describe the history of Islamic philosophy and explain its interaction with and impact on Western European philosophy.
2. Identify select Islamic philosophers and their positions on select philosophical issues by reading key Islamic philosophical works and/or secondary sources.
3. Develop skills used in reading and analyzing a philosophical issue
4. from the Islamic tradition. These skills should be applied to either primary or secondary sources.

4. Global Learning Activities

These activities will be organized according to topics covered in the course. I have relied heavily on active learning strategies for Philosophy by Melissa Jacquart. I have freely copied and in some cases modified ideas that can be found here: <http://melissajacquart.com/teaching/resources-for-instructors/philosophy-active-learning-activities/>

5. Important Resources

- a. Campanini, Massimo, An Introduction to Islamic Philosophy, trans. Caroline Higgitt, Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, 2004.

- b. Adamson, Peter, *Philosophy in the Islamic World: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- c. Adamson, Peter, *The History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps* pod cast: "Philosophy in the Islamic World" <https://www.historyofphilosophy.net/islamic-world>
- d. Peter Adamson, *Philosophy in the Islamic World, A History of Philosophy without Any Gaps* vol 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. This book is a reworking of the podcasts and thus can serve as written form for ADA compliance
- e. *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, ed. Peter Adamson and Richard Taylor Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- f. Leaman, Oliver, *Islamic Philosophy: An Introduction*, 2nd. Ed. Polity Press: Cambridge 2009
- g. McGinnis, Jon & David C. Reisman, *Classical Arabic Philosophy: An Anthology of Sources*, translated with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary, Hackett Publishing Co.: Indianapolis, Cambridge, 2007.

Activity #1

Topic: Introduction to Philosophy in the Islamic World

Objective: Students will be able to describe the history of Islamic philosophy and its interaction with Western Europe

Procedure:- Students will listen to recorded lecture, "Philosophy and Islam" by Peter Adamson. (pod cast from <https://historyofphilosophy.net>) A written version of the content of that podcast can be found in Ch1 of *Philosophy in the Islamic World*, by the same author. This podcast gives a very broad overview of the History of Islamic Philosophy. After the lecture/podcast introduction, students will each be assigned 1 of 5 major philosophers/movements to research and will write a basic overview of: who, what, when where, what did they write.... (Al Kindi, Al-Farabi, Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Averroes) These are to be turned in for a homework grade the following class period.

In the next class, students will be grouped by philosopher. Student groups will be given 10 minutes to prepare a group presentation. Each group will take 3-4 minutes to present what was learned about the individual and their work. The presentations will be given in historical order to give a sense of the progression of philosophy in the Islamic world. Individual write ups will be collected at the end of the class period.

Assessment and Follow-up Assignment: Individual write ups will be graded for a homework grade. There will be questions in quiz/test that will test retention of basic information.

Resources:

“The Straight Path: Philosophy and Islam” Podcast <https://www.historyofphilosophy.net/intro-islamic-world>

Adamson, Peter, The Straight Path-Philosophy in Islam, Philosophy in the Islamic World, A History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps, vol. 3, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. 3-9. This book is a reworking of the podcasts produced by the author. This chapter could serve as a source of information available in print to meet ADA compliance.

Campanini, Massimo, An Introduction to Islamic Philosophy, trans. Caroline Higgitt, Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh 2008

D’Ancona, Cristina, Greek into Arabic: Neoplatonism in Translation, in The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy, ed. Adamson, Peter and Richard Taylor, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2005.

Research on individual philosophers: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <https://plato.stanford.edu/>

Activity #2

Topic: Determinism and *Free Will*- Mutazilites

Objective: Examine philosophical concepts of Free will and determinism from Western and Islamic perspective. Compare and Relate philosophical concepts from Islamic and Western Philosophical traditions. This activity can be used studying the issue comparing from a western perspective (Richard Taylor’s Metaphysics, Peter van Inwagen) and the question of Causality in the Islamic schools of the Mutazlites. This activity will be repeated again in Activity #3, only this time with the focus on Determinism and the Ashirites.

Procedure: Complete Turn Taking.¹

¹ Idea taken in large part from <http://melissajacquart.com/teaching/resources-for-instructors/philosophy-active-learning-activities/>

Size: Entire class, or small groups, at most 8.

Time: one class (8 questions can be addressed in a 50-minute class).

Taken from: Prof. David Concepcion and Juli Kathryn Thorson

Activity

1. Students will be assigned to read at least 3 views of the topic. Each student should be asked to bring a couple questions to class. These can be clarificatory questions, issues they think were left unresolved, or even ideas or positions not yet considered.
2. Have students arrange themselves in a circle. Alternatively, students can be in small-medium size groups.
3. One student reads a question aloud. The student to their left then has **one minute of uninterrupted time to speak and give their thoughts**. This person signals that they are done speaking by saying, "OK, I'm done".
4. The next person to the left goes, has one minute of uninterrupted time to speak, and signals they are done by saying, "OK I'm done". Finally, the third student to the left goes, following the same pattern.
5. After three people have had a chance to speak, the conversation is opened up to the whole group for two minutes of discussion.
6. The next student gets to ask a question, and this cycle continues.

Pointers

- A benefit of this activity is that it allows students to speak uninterrupted. It also allows the students to work through some of their issues, questions, or concerns with the text together.

Assessment and Follow-up Assignment- some of the questions can be used in tests. Students could be asked to turn in their questions for a homework grade. Questions could be uploaded to the LMS before class.

Resources: Passages from or summaries of various western philosophers. Instructors should supply passages from western traditions. For Islamic sources, select from the list below. You will want material on Mutazilite "free will" and a western philosophical source, such as Richard Taylor's *Metaphysics* and perhaps Jean-Paul Sartre "Existentialism is a Humanism"

Arabic Philosophical sources:

"Causation in Arabic and Islamic Thought," SEP <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arabic-islamic-causation/>

"Ash'ariyya and Mu'tazila," Neal Robinson, <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/rep/H052>

“Causality and necessity in Islamic Thought,” David Burrell
<http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/rep/H005.htm>

Mu`razilite sources:

“All for One- the Mu`tazilites” Philosophy in the Islamic World, Peter Adamson, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, 10-18.

“This is a Test: The Mu`tazilites” POD cast <https://www.historyofphilosophy.net/mutazilites>

Activity #3

Topic: Determinism and Free Will- Asharites

Objective: Examine philosophical concepts of Free will and determinism from Western and Islamic perspective. Compare and Relate philosophical concepts from Islamic and Western Philosophical traditions. This activity can be used studying the issue comparing from a western perspective This activity can be used studying the issue comparing from a western perspective (D’Holbac, Malebranche, John Locke) and the question of Causality in the Islamic schools of the Ashirites. This activity is repeated again in Activity #2, only this time with the focus on Freedom and the Mutazilites.

Procedure: Complete Turn Taking.²

Size: Entire class, or small groups, at most 8.

Time: one class (8 questions can be addressed in a 50-minute class).

Taken from: Prof. David Concepcion and Juli Kathryn Thorson

Activity

7. Students will be assigned to read at least 3 views of the topic. Each student should be asked to bring a couple questions to class. These can be clarificatory questions, issues they think were left unresolved, or even ideas or positions not yet considered.
8. Have students arrange themselves in a circle. Alternatively, students can be in small-medium size groups.

² Idea taken in large part from <http://melissajacquart.com/teaching/resources-for-instructors/philosophy-active-learning-activities/>

9. One student reads a question aloud. The student to their left then has ***one minute of uninterrupted time to speak and give their thoughts***. This person signals that they are done speaking by saying, "OK, I'm done".
10. The next person to the left goes, has one minute of uninterrupted time to speak, and signals they are done by saying, "OK I'm done". Finally, the third student to the left goes, following the same pattern.
11. After three people have had a chance to speak, the conversation is opened up to the whole group for two minutes of discussion.
12. The next student gets to ask a question, and this cycle continues.

Pointers

- A benefit of this activity is that it allows students to speak uninterrupted. It also allows the students to work through some of their issues, questions, or concerns with the text together.

Assessment and Follow-up Assignment- some of the questions can be used in tests. Students could be asked to turn in their questions for a homework grade. Questions could be uploaded to the LMS before class.

Resources: Passages from or summaries of various western philosophers. Instructors should supply passages from western traditions. For Islamic sources, select from the list below. You will want material on Ashirite determinism and western philosophical sources, such as (D'Holbac, Malebranche, or John Locke- Compatibilism)

Background: "Occasionalism" William Hasker <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/rep/K057>

Ash`arites:

"God Willing- the Ash`arites" Philosophy in the Islamic World, Peter Adamson, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, 106-112.

"God Willing: The Ash`aAarites" POD cast <https://www.historyofphilosophy.net/asharism>

Activity #4

Topic: Knowledge and Belief-

This activity will focus on issues of Knowledge in Islamic Philosophy. Key to this topic is that traditionally in Islamic philosophy, the fundamental issue concerning knowledge has been one of ontology, not epistemology.³ This is a result of the emanationist understanding of the cosmos found in much Islamic philosophy. For a more complete understanding see the introductory material in:

SHAMS C. INATI. Epistemology in Islamic Philosophy Copyright © 1998, Routledge.
<http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/rep/H019>

Campanni, Massimo, An Introduction to Islamic Philosophy, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004. "The Structure of the Cosmos" p94-107 and "The Human Intellect" 108-125. There are simple illustrations that may be beneficial to understanding.

Objective: The purpose of this activity is to get students to understand approaches to knowledge in Islamic thought.

Procedure: Group text reading.⁴

In context with studying Rationalists (Plato, Descartes) and Empiricists (Locke, Berkeley, Hume), in this module students will also learn about Al Farabi, Averroes, and Mulla Sadra. Passages from secondary sources may be used as a way to get at the positions espoused by each philosopher.

Sources for Al Farabi:

The Second Master-al-Farabi, Philosophy in the Islamic World: A History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps, vol. 3. Oxford University Press, 2016. 63-69

129. The Second Master- al-Farabi, Podcast <https://www.historyofphilosophy.net/al-farabi>

Al-Farabi, in "Arabic and Islamic Psychology and Philosophy of Mind"
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arabic-islamic-mind/#Avi>

Al Farabi- Alfarabi's Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, translated, with introduction Muhsin Mahdi, The Free Press of Glancoe, Division of the Macmillan Company, 1962 Available at:
<http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/books/farabi-pl-aris.pdf>

Sources for Averroes

³ Fanaei, Abolghasem, Theory of Knowledge in Islamic Philosophy, 1997
<http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/tkf.htm>

⁴ Several ideas for activities in this proposal are both adapted and taken directly, word for word, from
<http://melissajacquart.com/teaching/resources-for-instructors/philosophy-active-learning-activities/>

151. Single Minded: Averroes on the Intellect Podcast. <https://www.historyofphilosophy.net/averroes-intellect>

Single Minded: Averroes on the Intellect, Philosophy in the Islamic World A History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps, vol. 3., Peter Adamson, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, 187-193.

Sources for Mulla Sadra:

Mulla Sadra's Theory of Knowledge, Fazlur Rahman, The Philosophical Forum: A Quarterly, Vol IV, No, 1 Fall 1972, 141-152. <http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/books/philforum.pdf>

Return to Sender: Mulla Sadra on Motion and Knowledge, Philosophy in the Islamic World A History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps, vol. 3., Peter Adamson, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016 393-399.

Return to Sender: Mulla Sadra on Motion and Knowledge Pod cast
<https://www.historyofphilosophy.net/mulla-sadra-motion>

Size: Small Groups (2-4)

Time: 1 class

1. Select a relevant text or passage. Break it up into 1-2 paragraph sections.
2. Break students up into groups of 2-4. Give each group of students a different section of the text/passage.
3. Give the students time (~15 minutes) to read through and discuss their section of the text.
4. Bring the class back together. Each group (starting with the first part of the text) presents their section to the class.
5. As students present, the instructor should write/draw on the board, correct and add to, and provide examples as needed in order to help tie the concepts together.

Pointers

- This activity can help the students feel like the text is more manageable.
- This activity also allows for students to practice their communication skills.

Assessment: Students will write a paragraph to demonstrate their understanding of the position of Al Farabi, Averroes or Mulla Sudra. This could be a graded homework. Questions about the text could be incorporated later as part of a test essay question.

Activity #5

Mind and Body

The Purpose of this exercise is to acquaint students with two different arguments regarding the mind body or soul body relationship. While the arguments are similar, the goals of each philosopher are different.

Descartes

Rene Descartes The mind-body distinction, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy
<https://www.iep.utm.edu/descmind/>

Rene Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy, Sixth Meditation.

Avicenna

“Avicenna, 7. “Psychology” in Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy <https://www.iep.utm.edu/avicenna/#H6>

Avicenna and the Avicennian Tradition, Robert Wisnovsky, The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy, 92-136, esp 96-105.

Selections on the Floating Man <https://www.davidsanson.com/texts/avicenna-floating-man.html>

What can Avicenna Teach us about the mind-body problem? Peter Adamson, Aeon,
<https://aeon.co/ideas/what-can-avicenna-teach-us-about-the-mind-body-problem>

Procedure: Group Text Reading⁵

1. Select a “difficult” text or passage. Break it up into 1-2 paragraph sections.
2. Break students up into groups of 2-4. Give each group of students a different section of the text/passage.
3. Give the students time (~15 minutes) to read through and discuss their section of the text.
4. Bring the class back together. Each group (starting with the first part of the text) presents their section to the class.
5. As students present, the instructor should write/draw on the board, correct and add to, and provide examples as needed in order to help tie the concepts together.

Pointers

- This activity can help the students feel like the text is more manageable.
- This activity also allows for students to practice their communication skills.

⁵ Taken from <http://melissajacquart.com/teaching/resources-for-instructors/philosophy-active-learning-activities/>

Alternative activity:

Jigsaw

Procedure: Jigsaw⁶

Size: Entire class, divided into four groups

Time: 1 class

Activity

1. Divide the material you would like to cover into four parts. For example, this could be four papers, four case studies, four theories or positions, etc.
 2. Pre-assign students a number (1, 2, 3, 4). Let students know that 1's will be responsible for paper/case study/theory #1, 2's are responsible for #2, etc.
 3. Be sure to provide students guidance or with a set of questions you want them to answer, or task you want them to complete with respect to their assigned part. For example, ask students to be prepared to present a summary of the ethical theory they have been assigned, and what that position might do in the following 2 situations.
 4. During class, create small groups of 4, with each group having a #1, #2, #3, and #4 member. Each member is to be the "expert" for their group on their topic, and to present their information, position, case study, etc to the other group members during the small group discussion.
- In another version of the Jigsaw, rather than small groups of 4, the class can be divided into 4 groups, with each group being responsible for 1 part. Have each of the four groups answer a set of questions related to their assigned reading or topic. Bring the class together as a group, and have each group present what they have discussed to the rest of the class.

Pointers

- The biggest advantage to the Jigsaw is that one person or group is responsible for one component. This allows, in some ways, for more content to be covered, since not all the students will have to read everything. Rather, one student (or one group of students) provides a synthesis to the rest of the group.
- The activity's success relies heavily on students coming to class prepared. This is why it is important to provide students with guidance on how to prepare for this activity (such as giving them a set of questions, or study guide).

⁶ Taken from <http://melissajacquart.com/teaching/resources-for-instructors/philosophy-active-learning-activities/>

Assessment: Participation and preparedness counts as homework grade. Perhaps have students individually submit questions on LMS prior to class time. That submission could be graded. Test content with quiz in the following class period or use content for test questions.

Resources: Passages from each philosopher