I. Introduction
The course seeks to understand as well as answer a number of central questions in philosophy through the writings of contemporary and major Western philosophers as well as through the close study of several fundamental issues that have arisen in the course of the development of the Western philosophical tradition, such as free will, our knowledge of the "external" world, and the meaning and value of truth and justice.

Readings will be 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 Jarvis Thomson, Hilary Putnam and Thomas Nagel.

The main focus of the course, however, will be on the questions: Why be good? What is consciousness? Do persons have rights? If so, in virtue of what do they have them?

What do human beings know, if anything, about the world they inhabit and how do they know it? If persons do not have free will, does it still make sense to praise and blame them?

The course is more about thinking and thinking things through than it is about coverage or the memorization of a bunch of facts.
Topics will include arguments for and against the existence of God, the value of religious belief and faith, the problem of evil, the nature of scientific explanation, perception and illusion, minds, brains and programs, personal identity ("who am I?"), freedom and determinism, moral "truth" v. moral relativism, forgiveness and justice, and what makes life worth living… to name a few.

The course is designed to be an introduction to philosophy and its problems and as such it is not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive. The classic materials are selected to provide a basis for understanding central debates within the field. The course is divided into four sections and each section is devoted to a key area within Western philosophy, in the areas of epistemology, general metaphysics, ontology, philosophy of mind, philosophy of religion, political philosophy, ethics:

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

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 groundwork 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.

The Syllabus for **PHIL S-4: Introduction to Philosophy** has been listed among the top ten most popular philosophy syllabi in the world for a number of years now.

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

**II. Class Times**  
The course will meet on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 12:00 to 3:00 PM.

**III. Course Requirements and Reading**  
Course Requirements will remain more or less the same as in prior years. Professor Teubner has taught the course at Harvard now for more than ten years. This summer it will follow a similar trajectory as it did last year and the year before and draw on many of the same readings. The Main Page Portal and the Resources and Lecture Notes Page from 2014 is still online and will give you a pretty good idea of what the course this summer is likely to be up to. It is on the Summer School Website and publicly available to view. Take a look:

**Introduction to Philosophy**  
[http://courses.dce.harvard.edu/~phils4/](http://courses.dce.harvard.edu/~phils4/)

**Intro: Resources, Links & Lecture Notes**  
NOTE: For the course this summer all the readings will be made available online on the course site. You will not be required to purchase a textbook or course-pack, but the *Norton Introduction to Philosophy (2015)* has most of the course readings between its two covers and is strongly recommended. It is the best introductory text available in English and will help to *bring home* the many problems we shall tackle and questions we shall ask.

IV. Writing
Four short papers are required on topics growing out of the readings and class discussions. The short papers should be about 5 pages in length. Paper topics will be available at least five (5) to seven (7) 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 family and friends and argue with them about it. The first of the four short papers will *not* be graded. It will be a credit/no credit paper. What a credit/no credit paper 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 receive for the rewrite. 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 a *quiz in class and online for those taking the course online* (near the end of the Summer term). The quiz should take about twenty minutes. There will be *no final exam* and *no midterm*. Other than the quiz, there will be no other 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 requirement.

VIII. Attendance
The attendance policy is currently under review. The policy will be announced on the first day of class.

IX. Grading
The course calls for four short papers, the first of which will be a credit/no credit paper, three short reader-response exercises, a quiz and participation. 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 reading exercises will count 10% and the quiz and participation each count 5% of your 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 look at all the papers before grades are handed out and decide on what grades 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. Course Web Site
The Course will have its own Canvas Web Site.

XII. Office Hours
I will hold office hours on Thursdays from 3:15 until 4:15 and by appointment. If you wish to leave messages for me, send me an email either at teuber@g.harvard.edu or teuber@fas.harvard.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 Summer semester.

XIII. Online Option
The Introduction to Philosophy course this summer may be taken ON CAMPUS or ONLINE. Classes meet on campus and you can take the course on campus as you would take a regular course at the university. The course also has an online option. You may take it online. Class sessions will be video-taped and posted within 24 hours of the time the class meets. So you may take the course on campus and watch the videos to refresh your memory or for review.
XIV. Academic Integrity
Harvard Summer School 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 Harvard Policies page at http://www.summer.harvard.edu/policies/student-responsibilities.

XV. Resources to Support Academic Integrity
The University offers essential information about the use of sources in academic writing.

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

To receive the most benefit, read all six sections of the guide. You will gain a deep appreciation for why and how sources are used in academic writing and the ethical implication of improper citation.

XVI. Accessibility and Accommodation Services
The Accessibility Services Office at Accessibility@demail.harvard.edu or 617-998-9640 offers a variety of accommodations and services to students with documented disabilities, permanent and temporary injuries, and chronic conditions. If you are a student with a disability, the Summer School will engage you in an interactive process to provide you with an equal opportunity to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from the academic activities and materials in the INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY Course. The manager of accessibility services will work with you on an individualized, case-by-case basis, to provide appropriate services to ensure you have a rich and rewarding academic experience.
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 dol’t! Just me!

Ahh...

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