

**COURSE OUTLINE
PHILOSOPHY 140**

SECTION I

SUBJECT AREA AND COURSE NUMBER: Philosophy 140

COURSE TITLE: American Philosophy

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Introduction to American philosophical experience, with special emphases on Emerson, Thoreau, Pierce, James, and Dewey.

LECTURE HOURS PER WEEK: 3

CREDIT HOURS: 3

PREREQUISITES: none

SECTION II

- A. SCOPE:** In Philosophy 140, classes will include the following topics:
Puritanism/Dogmatism. Deism (Paine, Franklin, Jefferson, others) and the American Revolution. Bostonian Transcendentalism: Emerson and Thoreau, philosophy of nature, civil disobedience, emancipation, self-reliance; the over-soul. Pragmatism: Pierce, James and especially Dewey. Pragmatism vs. dogmatism, reconstruction in philosophy, reconstruction in education, logical reconstruction, moral reconstruction, social philosophy.
- B. REQUIRED WORK:** Students are expected to recognize the difference between dogmatic and pragmatic thought in American philosophy and give some examples of both positions. Apply Emerson's philosophy of nature to contemporary environmental problems/solutions. Apply the doctrine or theme of civil disobedience formulated by Thoreau to the stand and actions of Martin Luther King, Jr. and other contemporary fighters for social justice and civil liberties. Apply the thought of Dewey and other modern American philosophers to the problems of individual and society, school and curriculum, education, etc, in the new millennium. Explain, defend and illustrate their own opinions concerning main issues or themes found in their assigned readings, class discussions and class presentation.
- C. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:** Since classroom work is an important part of the course, students who are absent, tardy, or inconsistent in completing homework assignments may hinder their own progress. Students are responsible for consulting with the instructor about completing any missed work. Students with more than 4 absences may be asked to withdraw. Students may be asked to confer with the teacher during arranged conference times. In addition, teachers are available for individual consultation during scheduled office hours.
- D. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:** Methods of instruction will vary according to the instructor, and may include any of the following: lecture/discussion, small group tasks, experimental/exploration, student presentations, use of a computer/internet. For more detail, see class syllabus.

A. OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT: The following objectives and

Outcomes represent the department's core requirements for student achievement.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT METHODS
To demonstrate an understanding of	Student will	As measured by
<p>1. Become acquainted with the long and often painful passage of American philosophy from Puritanism through Deism, Transcendentalism, etc. to Pragmatism.</p>	<p>a) participate fully in class; b) attend regularly and on time; c) complete individual and classroom projects; d) take responsibility for knowing, completing and, where necessary, making up assignments on time;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attendance records • class record • assignment records, including timely drafts
<p>2. Through the study of the American philosophical experience gain a deeper understanding of their native, adopted host or country.</p>	<p>a) demonstrate an understanding of the elements of American philosophy; b) understand and describe the sharp difference between dogmatism of American puritans and deism of Paine, Franklin, Jefferson, and others; c) explain the connection between Transcendentalist philosophy of Emerson and Thoreau and their stand on self-reliance, emancipation and civil disobedience; d) identify and explain through reading and discussion the connection between radical anti-dogmatic/atheistic philosophy of Dewey and his demand for philosophical, logical, moral, social and educational reconstruction; e) compare basic/different conceptions of American dogmatic and pragmatic philosophy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written assignments completed on time • short quizzes • tests
	<p>a) develop critical and analytic skills and cogent opinions; b) analyze and evaluate thoughts of great American philosophers through reading; develop and organize their own views about systems, traditions, problems and solutions in the writings of American philosophers studied in course; c) discuss and evaluate strengths and weaknesses of American philosophical views or doctrines learned in class; d) through their own examples, apply the thoughts of American philosophers on nature, ecology, racial justice, gender, reforms in philosophy, morality, education, and other matters studied in course to concrete situations in contemporary life;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation and presence in class discussions • assignments completed on time • study questions • tests

F. TEXTS AND MATERIALS: As selected by individual instructor.

G. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: Students will use word processing for written assignments.