

**From:** Allison Merrick  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 8, 2018 2:06 PM  
**To:** Michael Hughes <[mhughes@csusm.edu](mailto:mhughes@csusm.edu)>  
**Subject:** Re: GEC: PHIL 352

Dear Michael,

Thanks very much for the message and for the kind words about the course.

I agree with the committee that the course is challenging, but the short answer to your question is: yes. That is, I think that a student who did not have prior coursework in philosophy could be just as successful as a student that did. There are a couple of reasons: (1) the course is designed to introduce students to central concepts and subfields of philosophy (metaphysics, epistemology, or ethics) by taking key philosophical questions that arise when we consider works of art (e.g. is there one right way to evaluate a work of art or are all judgments of this kind subjective?) So no prior acquaintance with these key concepts or subfields is assumed at the outset of the course. (2) The reading assignments are challenging but the students complete low-stakes assignments to help them pick out the salient features of a reading and to check for understanding before they have to complete the higher-stakes examinations. In the event that it is useful for the committee, I've attached a sample assignment that is designed to help with the Plato reading assignment to give you an idea of how we might discuss a piece together in class.

I hope that addresses the concern. If you have any additional questions or if I can be of any help on my end, please do let me know. And thanks again for your careful review of the course--I greatly appreciate the efforts.

All good wishes,  
Allison

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**From:** Michael Hughes  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 8, 2018 12:50:14 PM  
**To:** Allison Merrick  
**Subject:** GEC: PHIL 352

Dear Allison,

At today's meeting the GEC had the opportunity to review your course PHIL 352. We were impressed by the course and thank you for your careful attention to detail in filling out the forms. Before we can approve the course for GE certification, we would be grateful if you could help us with one concern. In particular, this looks like a challenging course. While we understand that there is no philosophy major yet, and so no reason to answer the question about the appropriateness of the course for non-majors, we did wonder whether a student with no prior course work in philosophy would be as likely to succeed in the course as a student

who did have such a background. Would you be willing to address that question for the committee? I'm sure an email to that effect would be sufficient. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Warm regards,

Michael