

INTRO TO PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy 103_Summer, 2016
01:730:103:B2

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Online Live Office Hour: Thursday 4pm -6pm
(US EST) E-college Live Chatroom

Course Descriptions and Goals

This course is an introduction to some of the fundamental and important philosophical topics in metaphysics (theories of reality), epistemology (theories of knowledge), and ethics (theories of value). There are two general goals to achieve in this course, an ability to analyze ideas carefully and an ability to make your own refined arguments. We will read historical and contemporary writings on the topics and analyze, discuss, criticize their arguments. More importantly, we will make and defend our own position on the topics in class discussions and written assignments.

Readings

No textbook is required. Readings are available on this course's e-college Course Shell in *Doc Sharing*.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Lateness Policies

Class attendance is crucial. Irregular attendance not only hurts your course work but weakens accumulative class discussions.

- **Attendance** will be checked in terms of your **daily journal**. You should make a short comment (about 200 words) on an assigned reading in your Journal of this course's Course Shell every day from Monday to Thursday.
- You will be allowed a maximum of **two unexcused absences**, which means that you can skip your daily journal two times without any excuse.
- If you miss your daily journal more than two times, you will have **three points deduction** for each time from your numerical attendance grade.
- Excused absences are only for religious holidays, serious health problems, and serious family issues. To receive an excused absence, you need to provide appropriate documentation such as a confirmation letter from a health care provider or from the office of the Dean of the college.
- You are highly encouraged to develop your daily journal comments to your paper arguments. You might have my comment on your journal idea right behind your journal post. Check my comment to develop your idea.

2. Participation

All students are required to read assigned materials and contribute to class discussions. You are required to **post your ideas or questions for each topic in Class Discussions** of our course shell. You can **either start a discussion or respond** to others' comments. On our course schedule at the end of this syllabus, you can find the dates corresponding to each topic. You should participate in the class discussion for each topic no later than the last date of the topic on the schedule.

3. Quizzes and Final

There will be quizzes every weekend and one final exam at the end of the semester.

- Check the *Quizzes* on your course units. A weekend quiz will be released every Friday, and you are required to submit your quiz answers by Sunday of the week. You can use your resources such as the assigned readings, lecture presentations and your notes while taking these quizzes.
- The final will be a **live online exam**. No resources such as the assigned readings, lecture presentations, your notes are allowed.
- The final exam is cumulative. All the questions of the final will be chosen from the quiz questions.
- The final exam is scheduled on **July 8th**

4. Papers

There will be two short essays (1000-1500 words).

- 1st paper due: Friday, June 17th
- 2nd paper due: Friday, July 8th

The main goal of essay assignments is to assess how well you understand the philosophical problems, clarify the problems, and persuasively *develop your own philosophical view*. Writing topics will be posted on the course website at least two weeks before the due date.

- You are highly recommended to submit your rough draft at least *one week ahead of* the due date and have my comments to revise your paper.
- In case of **late submission**, there will be *one point deduction for each day*. Late assignments will be returned graded *without* any comments.

Grading

Your final grade will be determined by the weighted requirements as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Papers | 20% each |
| Quizzes | 15% |
| Attendance (Daily Journal) | 15% |
| Participation (Class Discussions) | 10% |
| Final Exam | 20% |

Each requirement will be graded numerically, ranging 0 to 30. Numerical grades correspond to letter grades as follows:

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| A : 30-28 | |
| B+: 27-25 | B : 24-22 |
| C+: 21-19 | C : 18-16 |
| D : 15-13 | F: 12-0 |

Academic Integrity

Rutgers Interim Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is the representation of the *words* or *ideas* of another as one's own. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgment is required when material from another source stored in print, *electronic* or other *medium* is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's own words.

Based on this definition, you are required to acknowledge direct quotations and paraphrases of materials found in any medium, including materials on the Internet. You can have more information about plagiarism on the web at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy>
Plagiarism or cheating on exams will result in automatic failure of the course.

Topics and Readings

Unit 1: The philosophy of Religion

Classical Arguments about God's existence

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, Q.2
William Paley, *Natural Theology*, Ch. 1 and 2
St. Anselm, *Proslogion*, From Ch. 1 to Ch. 5

The Existence of Evil and Free will

John Mackie, *Evil and Omnipotence*

Unit 2: Our Knowledge of the External World

Rene Descartes, *Meditations I and II*
John Locke, *Essay on Human Understanding*, Book I, ch i; Book II, ch. i, ch. ii, ch. iii;
Book IV, ch. xi
George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*, Second Dialogue

Unit 3: The Mind-Body Problem

Descartes, Selection from *Meditations II and VI*, and from *Reply to Objection II*
William G. Lycan, *The Mind-Body Problem*
John R. Searle, *Minds, Brains, and Programs*

Unit 4: Personal Identity

Locke, "Of Identity and Diversity"
Thomas Reid, "Of Identity" pp. 139-142
Bernard Williams, "Personal Identity and Individuation"
Derek Parfit, "Personal Identity"
David Lewis, "Identity and Survival"

Unit 5: Ethics

Meta-Ethics

Plato, Selections from *Euthyphro*
James Rachels, *Subjectivism in Ethics*
James Rachels*, *The Challenge of Cultural Relativism*

Normative Ethics

Mill, Selection from *Utilitarianism*
Kant, Selection from *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Second Section

Course Schedule

| Date | | Topic & Readings | | Due |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|---|---|
| Week 1 | May 31 st | Course Introduction | | |
| | Jun 1 st | Unit 1 | Aquinas | |
| | Jun 2 nd | | Paley | |
| | Jun 3 rd | Weekend Quiz Release (Due by Jun 6 th) | | |
| Week 2 | Jun 7 th | Unit 1 | Anselm | |
| | Jun 8 th | | Mackie | Make at least one post about Unit 1 topic in Class Discussion |
| | Jun 9 th | Unit 2 | Descartes's Meditation I & II | |
| | Jun 10 th | | | Rough Draft Due (optional) |
| | Jun 11 th | Weekend Quiz Release (Due by Jun 12 th) | | |
| Week 3 | Jun 13 th | Unit 2 | Locke | |
| | Jun 14 th | | Berkeley | Make at least one post about Unit 2 topic in Class Discussion |
| | Jun 15 st | Unit 3 | Descartes's Meditation II & IV, Reply to Objection II | |
| | Jun 16 th | | Lycan | |
| | Jun 17 th | Weekend Quiz Release (Due by Jun 19 th) | | 1 st Paper Due |
| Week 4 | Jun 20 th | | Searle | Make at least one post about Unit 3 topic in Class Discussion |
| | Jun 21 st | Unit 4 | Locke | |
| | Jun 22 nd | | Reid | |
| | Jun 23 th | | Williams | |
| | Jun 24 th | Weekend Quiz Release (Due by Jun 26 th) | | |
| Week 5 | Jun 27 th | Unit 4 | Parfit | |
| | Jun 28 th | | Lewis | Make at least one post about Unit 4 topic in Class Discussion |
| | Jun 29 th | Unit 5 | Plato | |
| | Jun 30 th | | Rachels | Rough Draft Due (optional) |
| | Jul 1 st | Weekend Quiz Release (Due by Jul 3 rd) | | |
| Week 6 | Jul 4 th | No class | | |
| | Jul 5 th | Unit 5 | Rachels* | |
| | Jul 6 th | | Mill | |
| | Jul 7 th | | Kant | Make at least one post about Unit 5 topic in Class Discussion |
| Jul 8 th | Final | | 2 nd Paper Due | |