

**Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 120B)  
Fall 2007**

**Wednesdays and Fridays 12:50–2:00  
Memorial Hall 302**

**Instructor:** Catherine Sutton  
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**Office hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:15–2:15  
Wednesdays, 2:15–4:15  
& gladly by appointment

**Course Description**

This course introduces students to philosophical problems and methods. Students will examine arguments for and against God's existence, theories of how we come to have knowledge, the nature of the mind and its relation to the body, the free will debate, and theories of ethics. Readings are drawn from classics in the history of philosophy and from current philosophical essays.

**Course Goals**

- Students will study the history of philosophy and become familiar with the work of significant figures in the Western intellectual tradition.
- Students will learn how to read and analyze philosophical texts, and by doing so, will sharpen their critical thinking and writing skills.
- Students will learn the difference between philosophical questions and other academic questions (such as scientific questions), and they will practice methodology for answering philosophical questions.

**Textbook**

*Reason and Responsibility: Readings in Some Basic Problems of Philosophy*, 13<sup>th</sup> Edition, edited by Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau.

**Recommended Resources**

*The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, at Reeves Library, Reference Main Level, B41 .C35 1999

This is more of an encyclopedia than a dictionary. It has excellent, concise overviews of the philosophers that we will be studying.

*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/>

This source is more in-depth than the *Cambridge Dictionary*. It is written by top philosophy professors, and it is a reputable and reliable online source.

### **Assignments**

Students will write and revise a four- to six-page paper.

There will be three essay exams.

There will be occasional short assignments and quizzes on the reading for the day.

### **Grading**

Essay exam one: 20%

Essay exam two: 30%

Essay exam three: 20%

Paper: 20%

Quizzes and short assignments: 10%

### **Grading scale**

Assignment and course grades sometimes include an element of qualitative judgment by the instructor.

94↑=A (Excellent)

90=A-

87=B+

84=B (Good)

80=B-

77=C+

74=C (Satisfactory)

70=C-

67=D+

64=D (Poor)

60=D-

Below 60=F

### **Paper Submission Guidelines**

All assignments should be typed and double-spaced, with standard margins and font size, unless otherwise specified. Number the pages of your papers, and staple your paper before turning it in.

Late papers may be docked ten points for the first day and five points for each additional day. If you need an extension because of extenuating circumstances, make arrangements with the professor as soon as possible.

## **Attendance**

Attendance is key to earning good grades in this class. If you are absent from class, you are responsible for finding out from classmates what you missed—including notes, announcements, and copies of materials. In-class assignments and quizzes cannot be made up; the grade for quizzes is a type of participation grade. If you turn in an assignment late because of an absence, the assignment grade will be docked a late penalty. If you have special circumstances for an absence, make arrangements with the professor as soon as possible.

## **Plagiarism and Collaboration**

The standard penalty for plagiarism or other cheating is an F for the assignment or an F for the course. Plagiarism cases are reported to Moravian's Academic Affairs Office, who may impose different penalties as appropriate to the offense.

Become familiar with the Academic Honesty Policy in the student handbook. If you have questions about the policy or about what counts as plagiarism and what is fair use, please ask so that you are confident about what is and is not permissible.

In this course, students may work together by giving one another *feedback* on papers and other writing. Of course, students may not have someone else do the revising or writing for them. Students may also get feedback from the Moravian College Writing Center. To make an appointment, call 610-861-1592 or stop by the Writing Center on the second floor of Zinzendorf Hall. The Writing Center now offers evening appointments (Sundays through Wednesdays) at Reeves Library. Sign up for those appointments at the Reference Desk.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Reasonable accommodation will be provided on a case-by-case basis to students with documented disabilities. Students who would like accommodations for learning disabilities or ADD/ADHD should meet with Mrs. Laurie Roth in the Office of Learning Services. Students who would like accommodations for other disabilities should meet with Dr. Ronald Kline in the Counseling Center. The student should then speak to the instructor so that appropriate academic accommodations can be made.

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**Course and Assignment Calendar**  
Subject to revision by instructor

**Section I: Philosophy of Religion (Does God exist?)**

Wed. Aug 29: Course introduction; introduction to philosophy as a discipline

Fri. Aug 31: Deduction and induction; validity and soundness

Due: Read Aquinas, "The Five Ways," pp. 21–22; William Rowe "The Cosmological Argument," 23–25

W Sept 5: Cosmological argument for God's existence (argument from first causes); principle of sufficient reason; soundness

Due: Read William Rowe "The Cosmological Argument," 25–32

F Sept 7: Ontological argument for God's existence (argument from *being*); Gaunilo's objection

Due: Read Anselm, "The Ontological Argument," 6–7

W Sept 12: Teleological argument for God's existence (argument from design or purpose); argument by induction

Due: Read Wm. Paley, "The Argument from Design," 32–37

F Sept 14: Problem of evil, an argument against God's existence

Due: Read J. L. Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence," 78–85, and write short report on assigned section from the article

**W Sept 19: Exam 1 (essay and short-answer questions)**

Due: Study for exam

**Section II: Epistemology (How do we come to know about the world?)**

F Sept 21: Introduction to rationalism and empiricism

Due: Read Descartes' Synopsis & First Meditation, 164–168.

W Sept 26: Descartes' epistemology (theory of knowledge)

Due: Read Descartes' Second Meditation and Fourth Meditation, 169–173, 180–184.

F Sept 28: Locke and empiricism; the Kantian compromise

Due: Read John Locke selection, 197–204

**Section III: Philosophy of Mind (Do you have a nonphysical mind or soul, or is your mental life located in the gray stuff in your skull?)**

W Oct 3: Dualism and idealism; Descartes' philosophy of mind; introduction to the mind-body problem

Due: Read Descartes' Sixth Meditation, 187–195

F Oct 5: Roots of dualism and immortality of the soul

Due: Read selection from Plato's *Phaedo*

W Oct 10: Materialism and its varieties

Due: Read selection from Lucretius's *On the Nature of Things*

F Oct 12: Materialism and its varieties

Due: Read Paul Churchland, "Behaviorism, Materialism, and Functionalism," 311 (begin at "Reductive Materialism") – 317 (through end of sections on eliminative materialism)

W Oct 17: Materialism and its varieties

Due: Read Paul Churchland, "Behaviorism, Materialism, and Functionalism," 317–321

F Oct 19: Contemporary dualism

Due: Read Brie Gertler, "In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism," 285–292 (through the end of section 4)

W Oct 24: Computer minds?

Due: Read Brie Gertler, "In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism," 292–297

**Section IV: Metaphysics and the Free-Will Debate**

F Oct 26: Introduction to the free will debate; paper workshop

**Due: Paper, 4–6 pages** (Be prepared for a classmate to read and review your paper.)

W Oct 31: Libertarianism (the free-will view); Halloween special: fatalism story

Due: Read Roderick Chisholm, "Human Freedom and the Self," 438–445

F Nov 2: Hard- and soft-determinism

Due: Revised Paper

W Nov 7: Conclude determinism; indeterminism and existentialism

Due: Read A.J. Ayer, "Freedom and Necessity," 414-419; read Giberson on Heisenberg and philosophical indeterminism (handout)

**F Nov 9: Exam 2 (essay and short-answer questions)**

Due: Study for exam

**Section V: Ethics (Is morality a matter of fact or a matter of opinion? How should we decide what is the moral thing to do?)**

W Nov 14: Relativism and objectivity in ethics; intro to ethical theory  
Due: Read Russ Shafer-Landau's "Ethical Subjectivism," 555–566

F Nov 16: Group discussion using three thought experiments in ethics; Reflective equilibrium in ethical theory  
Due: Read Mary Midgley's "Trying Out One's New Sword," 567–570

W Nov 20: No class; Thanksgiving recess

F Nov 22: No class; Thanksgiving recess

W Nov 28: Consequentialist and nonconsequentialist ethics; utilitarian ethics; intro to Kantian ethics  
Due: Read J. S. Mill, 642–653. Start reading at "What Utilitarianism Is" header.

F Nov 30: Kantian ethics  
Due: Read Kant, 625–640.

W Dec 5: Virtue ethics; rights views  
Due: Read Aristotle, 575–586

F Dec 7: Justice and society; course wrap-up  
Due: Read John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness," 600–610

**Exam week: Final exam (essay and short-answer questions)**