

COURSE SYLLABUS

Fall 2008

PHI 120A Introduction to Philosophy
MW 2b (8:50 AM-10:00 AM)
Classroom: Zinzendorf 103

Instructor: Dr. Bernie Cantens
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Office Hours: W 11:00 AM – 12:00 AM
T 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
MF 10:00AM -12:00 By Appointment

Text

Twenty Questions: An Introduction to Philosophy, 6th Edition
G. Lee Bowie, Meredith W. Michaels, Robert C. Solomon. Thompson-Wadsworth Publishers,
2007

ISBN-10: 0495007110 | ISBN-13: 9780495007111 | 848 Pages

Course description

Tasks and subject matters of philosophy, including major theories of reality, knowledge, religion, morality, and social justice. Attention to several classic philosophical texts as primary source readings (M3)

Relationship of course to university mission

A quality liberal arts education must take into account the ability to reflect across the spectrum of disciplines. This task requires skills of analysis of basic concepts and principles, reading and writing skills, and a constructively critical attitude. The study of philosophy is an integral part of a general curriculum that helps students achieve these cognitive skills.

Course Goals

The objectives of this course are the following: 1) to study the origin and nature of philosophy and philosophical reflection; 2) to study the various branches of philosophy (ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, etc.) and how these relate to everyday practical concerns; 3) to understand the methods and nature of philosophical inquiry; 4) to understand the difference between inductive and deductive reasoning; 5) to develop critical reading and writing skills; 6) to understand the central role of the discipline of philosophy in relation to the arts and sciences, and 7) to introduce students to the thought of some of the most prominent philosophers in history through primary texts.

Learning Outcomes

The following outcomes are expected of the students who complete this course: 1) Students should be able to think and write intelligibly about ultimate questions. 2) Students should have a

basic understanding of the relevance and importance of ultimate questions for the prosperity of individuals and society. 3) Students should be able to critically evaluate their own and others' answers to ultimate questions. 4) Students should have a basic understanding of prominent themes in the history of philosophy. 5) Students should have a basic understanding of ethical, metaphysical, and epistemological concepts, doctrines, and theories. 6) Students should have a basic understanding of the nature of philosophical inquiry and how it relates to inductive and deductive reasoning. 7) Students should have a basic understanding of the central role of philosophy for a liberal arts education. 8) Students should have a basic understanding of the thoughts of some of the most prominent philosophers in history.

Assessment

Reflection Paper (25 points)

Students will complete a philosophical reflection paper of 3 to 5 pages on a topic directly related to this course. The students will be graded according to four criteria: (1) Whether the introduction has a clear and explicit thesis and organized developing statements; (2) Whether the paper is well organized and demonstrates a logical flow of ideas; (3) Whether there are well constructed and developed arguments and/or well developed critical explanations of philosophical problems and solutions; and (4) Whether the writing skills, such as word use, sentence structure, grammar, and punctuation are correct.

The paper will be completed in parts and graded accordingly. The first 4 assignments will be student graded.

Assignment 1: Thesis (2 points)	Student and Professor Graded September 22, 2008
Assignment 2: Introduction (2 points)	Student and Professor Graded October 13, 2008
Assignment 3: Outline (2 points)	Student and Professor Graded October 13, 2008
Assignment 4: First Draft (4 points)	Student and Professor Graded November 17, 2008

Assignment 5: Final Paper (15 points) Professor Graded December 8, 2008

Quizzes (20 points)

There will be 5 quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz is worth 5% of the final grade and will consist of a one page essay. The worst quiz will be dropped. There will be **no make-ups** for missed quizzes. If a student is absent for a quiz the missed quiz will be counted as his or her worst grade and will be dropped. If a student misses 2 or more quizzes they need to make an appointment to see me.

Quiz 1: September 3, 2008

Quiz 2: September 17, 2008

Quiz 3: October 22, 2008

Quiz 4: November 12, 2008

Quiz 5: December 3, 2008

Exams (50 Point)

There will be two exams throughout the semester. Each exam is worth 25% of the final grade. The exam will be composed of essays and short answers.

Exam 1: October 1, 2008
Exam 2: December 15-18, 2008

Class Participation (5 Points)

Attendance will be taken every class period and students will be marked down for unexcused absences. Students will lose 1 point for every unexcused absence up to a possible 5 points. Students who attend all the classes on a timely basis will earn 5 points in class participation. Students can make up lost points in unexcused absences by actively participating in class discussions. Unexcused absences included only the following: (1) sickness with a doctors' note, (2) death in the family, or (3) some other extraordinary event.

Chronological Order of Assignments, Quizzes and Exams

September 3, 2008 Quiz 1	(5 points)
September 17, 2008 Quiz 2	(5 points)
September 22, 2008 Assignment 1: Thesis	(2 points)
October 1, 2008 Exam 1:	(25 points)
October 13, 2008 Assignment 2: Introduction	(2 points)
October 13, 2008 Assignment 3: Outline	(2 points)
October 22, 2008 Quiz 3	(5 points)
November 12, 2008 Quiz 4	(5 points)
November 17, 2008 Assignment 4: First Draft	(4 points)
December 3, 2008 Quiz 5	
December 8, 2008 Assignment 5: Final Paper	(15 points)
December 15-18, 2008 Exam 2	(25 points)

Topics:

- 1) Religion and the Meaning of Life.
- 2) Science, Mind and Nature.
- 3) Thinking and Knowing
- 4) Living a Good life
- 5) The Dilemma's of Personhood
- 6) Justice and Responsibility

Learning Methods

Multimedia This course will combine traditional classroom lecturing with multimedia presentations. Lectures will be supplemented with power point presentations and materials from the internet. All course materials, such as syllabus, review questions, term paper information,

etc., are posted on my web site <http://berniephilosophy.com> . This will give the students direct access to most of the materials at their convenience.

Black Board: Some basic information and assignments provided through black board.

Class Dynamic Class participation is expected of all students enrolled in this course. Questions and class discussions are encouraged as an effective vehicle to motivate the student's interest in the subject matter. *If there are few questions and little discussion taking place in the classroom, the professor reserves the right to choose individual students to answer questions or give their view and the arguments on a particular issue.* Therefore, careful daily reading of the text and handouts is essential for success in this course. The exams will consist of identification, multiple choice and essay-form questions.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is mandatory. Students will lose 1 point for every unexcused absence up to a possible 5 points. Students can make up lost points in unexcused absences by actively participating in class discussions. Unexcused absences included only the following: (1) sickness with a doctors' note, (2) death in the family, or (3) some other extraordinary event.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

See Student Handbook pp. 32 – 38

Student Behavior:

See Student Handbook pp. 38 – 40

Course Requirements

Reading of required text on a daily basis is essential to succeed in this course. Students are expected to be ready for class. This means that he or she should read the assigned chapters before the professor introduces it. Class participation, note taking, and discussion are highly encouraged. The study of philosophy does not only consist of memorization; students must also read analytically and reflect critically on the reading. When studying difficult material, it is often necessary to read it several times before a proper understanding is achieved. Do not be disappointed if you do not understand a philosophical text on your first reading.

Grading/Measures of evaluations:

Quizzes:	20%
Exam 1:	25%
Exam 2:	25%
Reflection Paper:	25%
Class Participation	5%

A=100-93; A- =92-90; B+=89-87; B=86-84; B- = 83-80; C+=79-77; C = 76-70; D=69-60; F=<59

PROGRAM AND READING ASSIGNMENTS
Lists of Readings, assignments, Exams and Dates:

Week 1	<p>INTRODUCTION What is Philosophy Some Logic</p>
	<p>RELIGION AND THE MEANING OF LIFE</p>
Week 2	<p style="text-align: center;">DOES RELIGION GIVE MY LIFE MEANING?</p> <p>Friedrich Nietzsche “God is Dead” pp. 21-22. “The Anti-Christ” pp.22-23 Albert Camus “The Absurd” pp. 30-33.</p>
Week 3	<p style="text-align: center;">HOW DO I KNOW WHETHER GOD EXISTS?</p> <p>Anselm “The Ontological Argument” pp. 43-45 Thomas Aquinas “Whether God Exists” pp. 45-47 William Paley “Teleological Argument” pp.47-49. Immanuel Kant “Proving the Existence of God by Way of Morality” pp. 54-55.</p>
Week 4	<p>David Hume “Why Does God Let People Suffer?” pp. 50-54. Fyodor Dostoesky “Rebellion” pp. 55-58. Soren Kierkegaard “The Leap of Faith and the Limits of Reason” pp. 58-61. William James “The Will to Believe” pp. 61-65.</p>
	<p>SCIENCE, MIND AND NATURE</p>
Week 5	<p style="text-align: center;">WHAT DOES SCIENCE TELL ME ABOUT THE WORLD?</p> <p>Carl G. Hempel “The Deductive-Nomonological Model of Science” pp. 77-84. Thomas Kuhn “The Structure of Scientific Revolution” pp. 84-91. Karl Popper “Science: Conjectures and refutations” pp. 91-98.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">CREATION OR EVOLUTION?</p> <p>Charles Darwin “The Descent of Man” pp. 120-125. Duane T. Gish “Creationist Science and Education” pp. 125-134.</p>

Week 6	Philip Kitcher “Against Creationist” pp. 134-144. Cory Juhl “On the ‘Fine-Tuning’ Argument” pp. 152-154.
Week 6	EXAM 1:
	THINKING AND KNOWING
Week 7	WHAT DO I KNOW? Rene Descartes “Meditations” pp. 207-210 John Locke “Where Our Ideas Come From” pp. 214-217. George Berkeley “To Be Is To Be Perceived” pp. 217-221.
	LIVING A GOOD LIFE
Week 8	WHY SHOULDN’T I BE SELFISH? Plato “The Ring of Gyges” pp. 461-464. Thomas Hobbes “People are Selfish” pp. 466-467. Richard Dawkins “The Selfish Gene” pp. 469-472.
Week 9	WHAT IS THE RIGHT THING FOR ME TO DO? Aristotle “Happiness and the Good Life” pp. 524-531. Immanuel “Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals” pp. 532-535. John Stuart Mill “Utilitarianism” pp. 536-539. A.J. Ayer “Emotivism” pp. 542-545.
	THE DILEMMA’S OF PERSONHOOD
Week 10	IS IT OK TO BE EMOTIONAL? Aristotle “On Anger” pp. 314-317. David Hume “On Pride” pp. 321-324. Robert Soloman “What is Love” pp. 342-346.
	HOW SHOULD I FEEL ABOUT ABORTION? Dena S. Davis “Stem Cells, Cloning, and Abortions: Making Careful Distinctions

Week 11	pp. 369-371. Judith Jarvis Thomson “A Defense of Abortion” pp. 351-361. Alice Walker “Right to Life: What can the White Man Say to the Black Woman?” pp. 362-364.
Week 12	WHAT DOES RACE HAVE TO DO WITH ME?
	Laurance Thomas “What Good Am I” pp. 437-440. Anthony Appiah “But Would That Still Be Me?” pp. 445-449
	JUSTICE AND RESPONSIBILITY
Week 13	WHAT DO I JUSTLY DESERVE?
	Plato “Does Might Make Right” pp. 621-624. Thomas Hobbes “Justice and the Social Contract Theorists” pp. 624-628. John Stuart Mill “Utilitarian Theory of Justice” pp. 628-632. John Rawls “Justice as Fairness” pp. 632-636.
Week 14-15	Peter Singer “Rich and Poor” pp. 644-646. Amartya Sen “Property and Hunger” pp. 649-655. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels “The Immortality of Capitalism” pp. 669-670. Milton Friedman “The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits” pp. 670-673.
	Exam

PLEASE, as a courtesy to the other students in the class, turn off all phones upon entering class!