

MORAVIAN COLLEGE
COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring 2009

PHIL 120B Introduction to Philosophy
TR 5b (12:50 PM-2:00 PM)
Classroom: Memorial 302

Instructor: Dr. Bernie Cantens
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Office Hours: M and W 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
T and TR 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Text

Twenty Questions: An Introduction to Philosophy, (6th Edition) editor, G. Lee Bowie, Meredith W. Michaels, and Robert C. Solomon (Belmont, CA: 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.

Paper thesis (-2 if assignment is missed)

Paper introduction and outline (-2 if assignment is missed)

Quizzes (25 Points)

There will be 5 quizzes throughout the semester but only 4 will count towards your final grade. Each quiz is worth 6.25% of the final grade and will consist of a one page essay. If a student takes all 5 quizzes, then the worst quiz score will be dropped. If a student misses a quiz, then he can use the 5th quiz as a make-up. **There are no make-ups for quizzes unless you miss two and have a valid excuse for missing both.**

Quiz 1: February 3, 2009

Quiz 2: February 17, 2009

Quiz 3: March 19, 2009

Quiz 4: April 4, 2009

Quiz 5: April 28, 2009

Exams (50 Points)

There will be two exams throughout the semester. Each exam is worth 20% of the final grade. The exam will be composed of essays and short answers.

Exam 1: February 24, 2009

Exam 2: May 6, 2009 (1:30)

Class Participation

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

February 3, 2009	Quiz 1	(6.25points)
February 17, 2009	Quiz 2	(6.25 points)
February 24, 2009	Exam 1	(25 points)
March 12, 2009	Paper Thesis	(-2 if assignment is missed)
March 19, 2009	Quiz 3	(6.25 points)
March 26, 2009	Introduction and Outline	(-2 if assignment is missed)
April 4, 2009	Quiz 4	(6.25 points)
April 21, 2009	Final Paper	(25 points)
April 28, 2009	Quiz 5	Make up
May 6, 2009 (1:30)	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) Justice and Responsibility
- 6) The Dilemma's of Personhood

Learning Methods

Multimedia This course will combine traditional classroom lecturing with multimedia presentations. Every lecture will be supplemented with power point presentations and internet information. 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.

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:	25%
Exam 1:	25%
Exam 2:	25%
Reflection Paper:	25%

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

January 20	INTRODUCTION What is Philosophy (Handout)
January 22	Some Logic (Handout)
	RELIGION AND THE MEANING OF LIFE
January 27	Does Religion give my life meaning? Friedrich Nietzsche: “God is Dead” pp. 21-22. “The Anti-Christ” pp.22-23
January 29	Albert Camus: “The Absurd” pp. 30-33.
February 3	QUIZ 1 How do I know whether God exists? Anselm: “The Ontological Argument” pp. 43-45
February 5	William Paley: “Teleological Argument” pp.47-49.

February 10	David Hume: “Why Does God Let People Suffer?” pp. 50-54.
February 12	William James: “The Will to Belief” pp. 61-65.
	SCIENCE, MIND AND NATURE
February 17	QUIZ 2 What does science tell me about the world? Carl G. Hempel “The Deductive-Nomonological Model of Science” pp. 77-84
February 19	Thomas Kuhn “The Structure of Scientific Revolution” pp. 84-91.
February 24	MIDTERM EXAM
February 26	No Class
March 3	Recess
March 5	Recess
	THINKING AND KNOWING
March 10	What Can I know? Rene Descartes: “Meditations” pp. 207-210
March 12	Thesis is due John Locke: “Where Our Ideas Come From” pp. 214-217.
March 17	George Berkeley: “To Be Is To Be Perceived” pp. 217-221.
	LIVING A GOOD LIFE
March 19	QUIZ 3 Why shouldn’t I be selfish? Plato: “The Ring of Gyges” pp. 461-464.
March 24	What is the right thing for me to do? Aristotle: “Happiness and the Good Life” pp. 524-531.
March 26	Introduction and outline are due Immanuel “Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals” pp. 532-535.

March 31	John Stuart Mill “Utilitarianism” pp. 536-539.
April 2	A.J. Ayer “Emotivism” pp. 542-545.
	JUSTICE AND RESPONSIBILITY
April 7	QUIZ 4 What do I justly deserve? Plato “Does Might Make Right” pp. 621-624. Thomas Hobbes “Justice and the Social Contract Theorists” pp. 624-628.
April 9	Robert John Stuart Mill “Utilitarian Theory of Justice” pp. 628-632.
April 14	John Rawls “Justice as Fairness” pp. 632-636.
	THE DILEMMA’S OF PERSONHOOD
April 16	How should I feel about abortions? Judith Jarvis Thomson “A Defense of Abortion” pp. 351-361.
April 21	TERM PAPER DUE What does race have to do with me? Laurance Thomas: “What Good Am I” pp. 437-440.
April 23	QUIZ 5 Anthony Appiah “But Would That Still Be Me?” pp. 445-449
April 28	Is it ok to be emotional? Aristotle “On Anger” pp. 314-317.
April 30	Soloman “What is Love” pp. 342-346.
May 6 Wednesday 1:30 PM	FINAL EXAM

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